A RIDDLE.

WE have for many years been partially acquainted with the inmates of a house, whose history, if we were able to do justice to the work, would be interesting, and perhaps profitable to some portion of our readers. The house itself is fearfully and wonderfully made, and has stood in its present form a little more than forty years. The materials of which the house is made were originally very good, but now appear to be in rather a dilapidated and decaying state. It has been thought by good judges that there is contagion in the building; and this conclusion has been confirmed, by the appearance of "spots of leprosy in the walls, like fretting sores. Now what we wish to relate, is in reference to the tenants of this house. And what think you of two families occupying one house? You know that unless they agree pretty well, they must live very uncomfortably together. Well, we know this to be the case; for although the house is inhabited by but two individuals, it frequently seems to contain, as it were, "the company of two armies." We have known them to be engaged in such deadly strife, that without foreign interference they would certainly have destroyed each other.

It will answer our present purpose, without calling names, to designate these fighting neighbors, the Old man and the New man; for the eldest tenant of the house has in reality had possession of the premises ever since the house was built; but the other took his residence in the same house, some years afterward; having the consent of the builder and owner of the house. On the occasion of the New man's moving into the house, we shall never forget what a dreadful uproar took place. The Old man is not only old, but he is a strong man; and being armed, had kept his palace, and his goods were in safety, until that memorable struggle took place. No tongue

can tell, nor pens describe, with what awful desperation that battle was fought. It was the most sanguine and dreadful conflict, between the most powerful disputants, and attended with the most thrilling and affecting circumstances that we ever witnessed. Incredible as our description of this scene may appear, we do assure our readers that the very heavens grew dark on that occasion! loud thunders shook the world, and vivid lightning's played around! The voice of words were heard, until the reeling walls of the disputed house seemed ready to be dashed into a thousand pieces, like a potter's vessel.

The old man contended for the exclusive possession of the house, and set up the plea, that he had held a peaceable possession so long, it was his lawful property. Moreover, he found certain passages of the law, which he interpreted to mean, that no such tenant should be allowed to occupy any part of the premises; from ancient records he also showed that the house had been mortgaged to his king, whose name was Death; and by his will, he claimed the exclusive right to the house; but he was foiled by the Wonderful Counselor for the other, who proved beyond dispute, that the bond was canceled, and the property redeemed from all encumbrance, excepting that he, the old man, might, by the suffrage of the proprietor, remain in the basement story for a short time. He also contended that he was able to defend his right, and that he would never go out alive. But, as the result of that struggle has abundantly proved, the old man was mistaken; for one, stronger than he, came, and the old man was bound, and his goods were spoiled. The victorious warrior, (for he was a man of war) who had made bare his arm in vanquishing this potent enemy, claimed the right to dispose of the premises as he pleased; and he assigned to the new man all the upper part of the house, to have and to hold from that date forth, during the pleasure of the landlord, or as long as the house should stand. When the new man entered

his mansion, how different was the scene! The conflict was over, the old man was in chains; and it was whispered that he was dead; and the new man made great reckoning on having the house completely purged, purified, set in order, made pleasant, peaceable and beautiful; but scarcely had the work of reform and improvement commenced, when the new corner thought he could perceive signs of life in the carcass of the old vanquished foe; nor was he at all deceived in his apprehensions; for suddenly the old man revived, and in a most surly, insolent and quarrelsome manner, bid the new man leave the house. The new man trembled convulsively, at this unlooked for treatment- plead that he had been put in possession by the lawful owner of the Property; and that he had obtained liberty to hold possession of all the upper part of the house, as long as it should stand; and that when this earthly house should be dissolved, he bad a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. But the old man disputed his plea, and insinuated that he was laboring under a delusion, in regard to having been put into possession of the house, or any part of it; and declared that the new man had not been put into the possession, and that he could not in justice be. Finally the artful language of the old man was such that the new man began to fear exceedingly, that he was truly under some dreadful delusion. Under these impressions, he wept and prayed, and fasted, and labored, and struggled, for many days; until his Lord again appeared for his deliverance, and gave him a renewed evidence of his goodness and mercy. After this conflict was over, things went smoothly on for some time; but after certain days, the old man brought home with him some old comrades, (among whom was a very celebrated, and ardently pious Mr. Charity, D. D., and a few of his neighbors, Good Works, Carnal Mind, Law Righteousness, and one very shrewd old fellow, called Human Reason, A. M.) and insisted on entertaining them in the upper part of the house, as they were all used to high living. At first the new man objected;

but seeing that the company were all very pious, and being fond of religious company, and fearing that he would be thought uncharitable, if he should reject them, he consented; and they all came in, and seemed to enjoy a merry time; indeed, the old man himself began to be very religious; and he and his guests soon found occasion to chide the new man for backwardness, inertness, a want of zeal and activity, &c.; and he, poor fellow, began to feel something of his leanness and barrenness; he confessed the justness of their censure, and begged them to aid him in an attempt at reformation; to this, they being of the benevolent order, readily consented, and forthwith began a course of lectures, in which they told him that he was entirely too tight laced in his religious principles; that he was trusting too much to grace; and that he did not lay a sufficient stress upon good works; they read off to him a long chapter, upon duty religion, duty faith, duty prayer, &c.; and urged that he must be up and doing-that he must use the means of grace. They told him, moreover, that thousands, by tight b&cing, had become sickly; had brought on consumption, and even death. It was the unanimous opinion of the gang, that New man *must make brick without straw*; and when he complained, they told him he was idle; and they applied the lash until his groans and sighs became indescribably dreadful; and it is our sincere opinion, that these thievish imps would have worked poor, distressed New man to death, if it had not been for an interposition of his Lord; for they had already got him to consent to change apartments with his fellow tenant, and he had moved down stairs, quite into the cellar. The new man had been persuaded to believe that for, and in consideration of his kindness in changing rooms with his neighbor, he would be exceedingly happy, and enjoy great peace of mind, &c. But to his mortification he found the room very dark, the light and warmth of the sun being shut out; and had only light enough to perceive that the room was dreadful filthy, and that it contained innumerable reptiles, serpents and scorpions. This

exercise threw him into a cold sweat, and he was dreadfully tried in his mind, to account for his troubles; he made some vain attempts to man, these serpents with carnal weapons; such as good resolutions, large quantities of formal prayer, and many other weapons of the same kind, that he found among the lumber of the old man-all to no effect; for he found himself only beating the air. In this dreary condition he remained, until the next visit of his Lord and Master, who came to his relief, opened the prison door, took his feet out of the stocks, set him in a large place, thrust his old man down into the nether apartment, and raised him, (the new man) again to the enjoyment of former light, life and liberty.

We might continue our parable ad infinitum; for the old man and the new man cannot get along peaceably together; the new man having received an order from the court of the King's bench, to crucify the old man with his comrades; and in his attempting to execute this sentence, they have had some awful combats; and the old fox has often *played the possum*, and made his antagonist think he was dead; but as soon as a favorable opportunity presented, he would revive; and in many instances would bring the other into subjection to the law of sin, that was written on the walls of the, house. The new man, in some of his struggles, has been heard to – cry out, O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? But we are credibly informed, that he has received an assurance from his Lord, that a few more struggles will end the strife-when the old crazy walls of the disputed territory shall be thrown down, and he shall then inhabit an incorruptible building, far from the noise and rage of the old man.

Reader, do you understand the riddle?

New Vernon, N. Y.,
March 1, 1811.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Page 658 - 662

A SERMON FROM A POPULAR TEXT.

THE text for this occasion, though not in the bible, may be found in the American Baptist Home Mission Society Record of Proceedings, at their fourth anniversary, held in Philadelphia. In the thirty-seventh item of their minutes we have the following remarkable passage:

"*Resolved,* That the Home Mission enterprise is one of the highest importance to the prosperity and perpetuity of our republican institutions, and should therefore receive the most cordial approbation and efficient support of every christian and patriot in all parts of our country."

To prove the divine inspiration or infallible veracity of the words of our text is by no means the object of the present 'lecture, as we presume that whosoever shall doubt the divinity of this passage will have his portion with those who suffer persecution and reproach for the sake of Jesus of Nazareth.

Be it ours, in the present discourse, to show, first, what is intended by "The Home Mission Enterprise." Second, to examine wherein the prosperity and perpetuity of our republican institutions are in the superlative degree dependent on said enterprise. Third, the universal obligation of *all parts* of our country to approbate and efficiently support this august assembly,

As a preacher, we are somewhat long-winded, but in the present case our limits admonish us to be very brief. We, therefore, without further preliminaries, come to the work before us. And

First. What is the Home Mission enterprise?

This part of our subject presents for consideration two inquiries, viz: first, of the Home Mission Institution, and secondly, of its enterprise.

1. The American Baptist Home Mission Society is a combination of men, women and children, governors, senators, congressmen, assemblymen, magistrates, lawyers, doctors, reverends, farmers, mechanics, merchants and laborers, embracing professors of christianity, and non-professors of all creeds, moral and immoral, Jew. or Turk. The only indispensable requisite for membership in this establishment is money; traitors, tories, whigs, democrats, administration or anti-administration men are alike acceptable in this confederacy, providing always they have money. None are constitutionally debarred from this society but the poor, who are not able or willing to pay the price required for membership. This institution is a union of church and world, an amalgamation of civil and ecclesiastical power, and is beyond all reasonable doubt a very prominent part of the image of the beast spoken of in Rev. xiii. 14-48.

2. The enterprise in which this moneyed hierarchy is at present ostensibly engaged is the salvation of the souls of men in the United States. but particularly in the great valley of the Mississippi. This object they propose to accomplish, first, by raising a vast amount of funds.; second, by calling forth to the work a multitude of missionaries, who, but for this bait, would never think of preaching; third, by arrogating to themselves the right to select, commission, pay off, and discharge from service, preachers, agents, mendicants, school-masters, tract peddlers, &c.; fourth, by sending their hirelings into the valley of the Mississippi, with directions to "Go and possess the land." This object they openly avow their printed documents. (See Home Mission Record from which

we have taken our text.) The following words we copy from the speech of the Rev. John Dowling:

"The object of the Home Mission Society is not to set themselves in battle array against the enemies of truth; but to *pre-occupy* the ground."

No, indeed, they know better. To fight the enemies of truth would but illy comport with the objects or interests of this institution. Not, therefore, to combat error, but to possess the ground, are their missionaries sent thither, and under cover of their commission from the lords and nobles of this society, their underlings hesitate not to wage a war of extermination against the Old School Baptist churches and ministers, which until the rage of modern missionaries commenced, were quietly and happily permitted to worship God according to his word in the far West; to drive them from their homes, and Ahab-like, take possession of their vineyards.

In the prosecution of this diabolical enterprise the old fashioned bible Baptists of the Western Valley, by whom that immense territory was first settled, who have encountered the savage Indian, the wild beasts and serpents of that then wilderness region, who have cleared and cultivated for themselves a little spot, as they vainly hoped, which was and should remain far removed from the baleful effects of New England divinity, we say, in the prosecution of the mission enterprise, these venerable children of the Most High God have been made to weep, as it were, tears of blood; for no sooner was the mission contrivance introduced among the Baptists of our Eastern States, and swarms of their hirelings were sent to the West, than we heard the groanings of our oppressed brethren sounding with agony over the Alleghany, praying the churches of the East to let them alone - to stay the scourge, call back their emissaries, and leave the Baptist

cause in that country in the hands of God. But to all their entreaties and tears the Mission Societies turned a deaf ear. The daughters of the horse-leech were by the society let loose throughout our eastern churches, with a lie in their mouths, declaring that the Western States were destitute of the gospel, and of the bible, and of schools, and of all means of information and of salvation; than which a more down-right falsehood had never been uttered. The sympathies of thousands of well meaning, and in many instances real children of God, were enlisted in the enterprise. Thousands of men and millions of dollars were demanded by the conniving, avaricious engineers of this missionary machine; while their demand was but too promptly complied with by the unsuspecting Baptists and citizens of the East.

Our readers will recollect that our discourse is in short hand. We have not room at present to enlarge; so we pass to the consideration of our second proposition.

Second. We would inquire wherein or how oar republican institutions are in a superlative degree dependent on the enterprise of the American Baptist Home Mission Society? It is not our object to meddle with politics. We have and shall continue to avoid making our paper a vehicle for political matters. But in the present case, in ferreting out the hidden things of dishonesty, we are compelled to touch upon the subject, which, under other circumstances, would not belong to, or comport with the design of our journal.

With that effrontery which might amply nerve a pirate, the American Baptist Home Mission Society claims to be the bulwark of our republican institutions; and upon that claim infers that she is justly entitled to the approbation and efficient support of all the patriots and christians in all parts of our country. Now if her imperial ladyship’s premises are good, her inference must be just; for all must allow that it is

duty to cherish and support the pillars on which the fair fabric of our civil amid religious liberty rests; but if her premises are false, and republicanism does not depend for prosperity and perpetuity upon her clerical interference, then her claim upon christians and patriots is a religious fraud. And in order to determine the equity of her claim, we will examine the subject as briefly as possible; and in so doing, let us inquire, as we have proposed, On what is this claim founded? Is it because by her our republican institutions were called first into existence? Certainly not; this institution is now but four years old, and the foundations of our republican institutions were laid in the blood of our patriotic progenitors more than half a century ago. But second, Does not her claim then rest upon the supposition that no republican form of government can stand unaided by a religious national establishment like herself? If so, nothing can be more absurd or ridiculous. The very history of our nation vetoes her claim, and sixty years' experience has told the listening world in a voice of thunder that America could be free, republican and happy, without the aid of priestcraft or Popery. This voice has been heard with surprise, and at its sound the nations of Europe have trembled. Their population have, from degraded servitude to earthly priests and potentates, attempted to throw off their galling yokes and imitate our glory; but they, alas! bound fast in ecclesiastical chains, have, as yet, struggled to but little purpose; while the very chains which binds them down are those of institutions which are now precisely what the American Baptist Home Mission Society wishes to be. It is a remarkable fact that there never has existed a republican form of government connected with a religious hierarchy; for fire and water are not more opposite to each other than these two extremes. Nor was there ever a republican government overthrown or prostrated without the interference of priesteraft. This religious viper has ever labored to make, nations believe that their prosperity and perpetuity depended on their religious

maneuverings; and wherever this notion has prevailed, the glory of nations has fallen to rise no more forever. Mark the prevalence of this sentiment in all the papal nations of the earth. In every instance these governments have been persuaded to believe their prosperity and perpetuity depended on their religion; and as legitimate consequence, emperors have bowed obsequiously to the Pope of Rome, and received their crowns, and making peace by the most humiliating acts that mortals could perform - in kissing the toe of his holiness. And yet for such halcyon times in the history of America the society seems to pant.

But again. Was this insulting resolution of the society passed in order to awe the people of these United States into a compliance with their clerical arrangements? Truly it wears such an appearance. Make the patriots and christian of America believe the doctrine of the resolution, viz: that the missionary enterprise is of the *highest importance* to the prosperity and perpetuity of our republican institutions, and every democrat and christian in our land will, in the spirit of our illustrious fathers, pledge their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor, to support the enterprise, which they shall be duped to believe is identified with the foundation of our civil and religious rights. But let us suggest for the consideration of the society that in our opinion Columbia’s patriotic sons are at this time hardly prepared to commit to their sacred hands their lives, their honor, and what the society holds still more dear, their fortunes. Never while the voice and blood of our pilgrim fathers, who were martyred on the shores of our Eastern States for non-conformity to the dogmas of the dominant party of religionists, who, in a kindred spirit with that of the society, held that the prosperity of the American continent depended on their religious phrenzy, continues to stain the soil on which they gloriously fell, rather than submit to clerical dominion those invaluable rights which no republican government could ask, or christian

and patriot could yield. Before the citizens of this great republic can believe the doctrine of the resolution, they must be made to forget whose blood was poured forth in torrents. to set us free from tyranny and priestcraft. Base ingratitude, foul apostasy, unexampled degradation, and an utter destitution of respect for the memory of the sainted heroes of our revolution, can ever sink us low enough to submit to the abominable corruption of that resolution, which would couple priestcraft with christianity and republicanism.

But last of all, we inquire, Is the American Baptist Home Mission Society itself a republican or a christian institution? Let the task be ours to prove that it is neither republican or christian, and of course cannot be identified with the republican institutions of America.

1. We prove that it is not republican. By the term *republican* we understand a government that not only rejects a monarchy, but which invests the people with the supreme authority, and which rejects aristocracy. This is the republicanism for which our heroes bled, and the logic which kind heaven, through them, has handed down to us, and which the resolution calls on us to barter away for very priestcraft.

But to the investigation. We show that this institution is anti-republican because pure republican principles qualifies no man to participate in the concerns of the establishment.

2. Because anti-republicans, tories, savages, or even Satan himself, would be alike eligible to membership, and to any office or power in this institution for a sum of money, providing always that they call themselves Baptists, and pay. the requisite sum for their birthright.

3. Because this institution denies the republican doctrine of equal rights in civil and religious matters, and has declared a war of extermination against all such religious sects as will not favor their plans.

4. Because she has sent her emissaries (called missionaries) with instructions to invade the peaceable churches of the Mississippi Valley, and by whom the peace and harmony of the Old Fashioned Baptists in the West have been prostrated, so far as the influence of these agents could effect it, and in consequence thereof have been made to weep; while to their tears, remonstrances and entreaties this mammoth institution has invariably turned a deaf ear.

5. Because this institution is emphatically a huge moneyed monopoly, amassing large funds, and professedly intending to occupy the whole ground; *i. e,* turning the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ into merchandise, and arrogating to themselves the right of dictating to the churches and citizens of the West what preachers they shall, and what they shall not hear and support.

6. Because the Home Mission Record, published under their immediate patronage, has attempted to stigmatize the name of Richard M. Johnson, and other distinguished. patriots and statesmen, with infidelity, because they opposed the amalgamation of civil with religious legislation, in the case of the Sunday Mail question.

7. Because the constitution and regulations of this institution are highly aristocratic; vesting the supreme authority in the hands of a few dignified characters, and dealing out to the rich and influential seats and titles of honor, dignity and distinction, irrespective of character, and proportioned only to the amount of money which they pay for such titles and distinctions.

Having in the seven above named particulars shown that the institution is anti-republican, we now pass to show that they are equally anti-christian, and consequently not entitled to the patronage which they arrogantly claim from the christians and patriots of our country, for the following reasons, viz:

1. Because all christian institutions are under the immediate direction of the great King of Zion, and authority for them is distinctly given in his statute book - the bible. In that sacred volume there is not one word of authority to be found for the American Baptist Home Mission Society, or any other religious society except the church of God alone and she is not only forbidden to amalgamate with the world, but commanded to “come out and be separate from the world.”

2. Because this institution, regardless of the order. of the house of God, and of the indignity which they thereby cast upon the sacred name and office of our Lord Jesus Christ, assume the right to call, commission, send forth and sustain men to preach in the name of our, Lord Jesus Christ, what they profess to believe is gospel: appointing for them their field of labor, the time of their service, the manner of their work, and the amount of their reward; and for all which assumption of power they can find just about the same divine authority that the Pope of Rome, and his mistress, the Whore of Babylon, can for the same extravagances, but no more.

3. The anti-christian character of this institution is manifested by the national character which she assumes, and the dragon voice with which she speaks. In the former, calling herself American; and as in the resolution before us, she claims the patronage of this entire nation. In the latter particular, her voice is dragon-like, because she calls on the world for support and approbation. The church of Christ has never

called on the civil powers for either support or approbation. All the church of Christ has ever asked of the civil governments has been simply to let her alone. She knows no king but Jesus; she will be supported by no husband but her Maker, and will ascribe salvation to no other name than Jesus.

4. We show that this institution is anti-christian because she employs men who are prepared for her service, not by the Holy Spirit, but by a course of preparatory study at some theological seminary or college, and gives the decided preference to such of them as preach a system of works, or means, and such as are the most expert in getting up revivals, collecting funds, establishing Sunday Schools, Tract Societies, and other kindred institutions of modern human invention.

5. Because they give flattering titles to men; such as Reverends, D. D's, Presidents, Vice Presidents, &c., which in their religious application, as by them used, are expressly forbidden in the word of God. Among the numerous presidents, directors, life-members, &c., published with the Minutes of their late meeting at Philadelphia, we can scarcely and a name disconnected from some title like Rev., Hon., Zsq., M. D., D. D., Gov., Gen., or something of that description; by which is made to appear their utter disregard of the authority of the bible, where such authority comes in competition with their ambitious notions.

6. Because of the dishonorable means resorted to to gain funds to carry on their enterprises - pretending that the Lord’s treasury has been overdrawn, and that the Lord, through them, is calling upon the people to replenish it with silver and gold, and endeavoring to impress upon the minds of the people the false and idolatrous notion that a liberal

supply of money will promote the eternal salvation of souls. All of which is false and anti-christian.

7. This institution is anti-christian because in opposition to the Old School Baptist church, ministers, and private members, who will not own their clerical power, or regard their arrogant pretensions. Their hostility has to a greater Or less degree been felt in perhaps every branch of Zion in America, which stands on the primitive platform.

Thus have we, in as brief a way as the nature of the subject would admit of, examined the grounds of the resolution of the society - “that their enterprise is of the highest importance to the prosperity and the perpetuity of our republican institutions” - and found their claims to be about as well founded as Satan’s title was to those lands which he once offered our Lord as a temptation; but no better. From the investigation of the subject thus far we may infer,

Thirdly. The arrogance of the universal claim of this institution on all the christians and patriots of our country to approbate and support the institution. This obligation we find, on strict examination, to be as just, and equitable, and republican, and imperative, as are the claims of his holiness, the Pope, when he calls for universal homage as the Vicegerent of God, prince of the apostles, and universal bishop of the church, &c.

Therefore, to close our lecture on this subject with a word of exhortation, as the custom is, we exhort you, our readers, as you love priestcraft, clerical usurpation, bigotry, persecution and idolatry, to shell out your cash; as nothing can so much contribute to the elevation of this machine for the production of this train of evils, as the bestowal of your money, your cash, your influence, your name; and above all, dash out your yellow-jackets - gold - for this will immortalize you. Buy

yourself a membership, it will cost but a few dollars; or a life-membership; this will cast more, to be sure; but then it will secure you a membership as long as you live, let your character be what it may. Or, buy a directorship for life; this will emblazon your name on the list of modern philanthropists, and give you a seat on which the moneyless Peter and John did never sit, in an assembly from which the despised Nazarene, who for our sakes became poor, stands constitutionally rejected; a seat where christians will not envy your situation. Therefore, as you hate that civil and religious liberty for which our fathers' bled, as you despise the equal rights of man, and the republican institutions of our country, as you prefer anarchy, hierarchy, or aristocracy to the present form of our government, make no delay; hasten to the support of the American Baptist Home Mission Society; take with you all your worldly substance, and reek assured you will thereby cast in your mite to overthrow all that republicans hold dear, and aid to afflict and persecute, and finally slaughter, the despised followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. "But know ye, that for all these things God will bring you into judgment."

A word to our Old School brethren, and we will close for the present. Brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might; have no confidence in the flesh; be patient in tribulation; suffer reproach cheerfully for the sake of your adorable Master. Remember it will be but a little while, at the longest, that you are to endure these things. God will shortly bruise Satan under your feet. The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath you are his everlasting arms. Therefore, fear not, thou worm Jacob; no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment shalt thou condemn, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee. Mark the footsteps of your Captain, your Leader; he passed this way before you; and with him may it be our glory to despise the shame, endure the cross,

and bear his reproach; for unto you it is given, in behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake. Bear a faithful testimony against all the hidden things of dishonesty, by your words, by your lives, and by your conversation.

"And when your Captain, Christ, shall come,
With sound of trumpet, not of drum,
Even then our well dress'd ranks shall stand
In full review, at God's right hand;
Then we'll march up the heavenly street,
And ground our arms at Jesus' feet."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
July 15, 1836.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 310 – 321

ASHDOD LANGUAGE.

IN a late number of what is called the *Christian Index,* (a significant name, inasmuch as that paper often points at christians, as Ishmael did at Isaac, although it never pursues ‘the christian course,) we find a kind of illegitimate article, having no one to father it; and being disowned by its progenitor, it is cast upon the hospitality of the editors of the *pointer,* with instructions for them to take in the little foundling, or let it die unnoticed and unmourned, as they may choose; but rather than expose the author, let it die. The humane editors have adopted the little nondescript, and being highly gratified, desire more of the same brood.

The article alluded to commences with high commendations of the Baptist church, and holds the following language, viz:

“It has been our *peculiar* glory to take the scriptures as our guide. We have built upon their broad basis, and in simplicity of soul have attempted conformity to the primitive church of Christ. In our denomination there are no splendid innovations; the constitutions of our churches, their ritual, discipline and creed, accord with the New Testament. Bible truth has been the object of our investigations, and finding it, we have attempted to yield obedience to its requisitions. This simple hearted faith and obedience constitute the beast of the Baptists. I have confidence, therefore, in their integrity to do what they see clearly to be their duty.”

To the above paragraph, abstractly considered, we Would not object, provided the declarations were all true, which unhappily is far from being the case. We most cheerfully admit “it *has been* the peculiar glory of our churches to take the scriptures for their guide;” and that there are still a remnant, according to the election of grace, who glory in a strict conformity to the law of Christ, as laid down in the New

Testament, we fully believe; but to assert that there are no splendid innovations among the Baptist denomination is so palpably false as hardly to require a contradiction. The balance of the article will show its writer entering our denominational enclosures laden with the *wedge,* and the garments of the Babylonians, and giving a full contradiction to the assertions quoted above.

He stops his commendations, as he calls them, and anon he takes up a lamentation, and the first sob that breaks his heart is that the Baptists are in rear of many denominations in active and efficient effort, &c. 'What harmony! first congratulate the Baptists for being perfectly scriptural, and free from splendid innovations, and then lament that the Canaanite, the Hitite, the Jebusite, the Hivite, &c., are in advance. How are we to understand these disciples of Gamaliel? Do they mean to say the Baptists are the most scriptural people on all the earth, and yet the other denominations are far more scriptural than they? Or, does this apparent discrepancy arise from the fact that "the legs of the lame are not equal?" But, lest we subject ourselves to the charge of uncharitableness, we will conclude the writer does not mean to say the other denominations are more scriptural than the Baptists; for if they are, he may wipe his tears and go and join them. But we will suppose he means that the other denominations are in advance, in regard to the unscriptural enterprises of the present day; and that we now hit the right nail on its head will be clearly demonstrated by the specifications of his lamentation, viz:

"First. We are remiss in our attention to Sabbath Schools.

"Second. We are guilty in furnishing the world the ministry we have given it, &c.

"Third. We are remiss in the cause of education."

At all, and each of these pours, the sorrows of his pious heart break forth. No grief on account of non-conformity to the divine rule; all his tears are absorbed in weeping over our non-conformity to the humanly devised corruptions of other denominations wherein they excel us in zeal.

But will it be thought censorious, or unkind, if we examine these mellow spots on this adopted article? What denominations are those so far in advance of Baptists in regard to Sabbath Schools? Shall we say there were more Sabbath Schools in the primitive church in the apostolic age than there are with us at this time? No; for in that case we would be guilty of departure from scriptural rule; but from this charge the writer himself has absolved us, and the editors of the *Pointer* have endorsed the absolution. Are we in the rear of the Baptists of any former age in this particular? If so, at what time since the day of John the Baptist. has our churches been infested with a greater number of Sunday Schools than at the present? Their own reports from time to time assure us there never were so many Sabbath Schools among the Baptists as at the present.

But to the question: What denominations excel us in this particular? In searching the good book we learn that the old Pharisees used to keep a *Sabbath School,* and by time same authority we learn they were very tenacious in attending it on every Sabbath day. At these ancient schools they used to read *Moses in their synagogues,* and they were very much engaged in *winning souls,* making proselytes, &c. But the apostolic church being anti-Sabbatarian, (See Col. ii. 12-17.) chose to remain far behind those denominations, whose zeal ‘was not according to knowledge. For the comfort, however, of the nameless author of the article, we will assure him that the New School Baptists are not so far in the rear of their Pharisaic brethren of eighteen hundred years ago, as he seems to imagine.

The Roman Catholics are another denomination who seem to be very actively engaged in their Sabbath School services, and if their visits to their Cathedrals at an earlier hour on ‘what they denominate the Sabbath, or the zeal of’ their devotion, or the number of attendants, or their methods of impressing on the minds of their pupils their lessons, be any criterion, we judge the old lady may be somewhat in advance of all her daughters in her attention to Sabbath Schools. As far as our own observation extends, however, we cannot discover that any of the Protestant daughters of the Mother of Harlots are in advance of the New School Baptists in regard to Sabbath Schools; the former are no more expert in inventing new projects than the latter are in copying the in, and the copy is so complete a transcript of the original that, for our life, we can detect no essential difference.

The second defect complained of is not to be got over by the Baptists quite as easily as perhaps some may at first imagine; they are charged with being guilty in furnishing the world with the ministry which they have given it. We freely admit the righteousness of this charge, in all its severity, as far as it is applicable; but we beg leave to say that it does not touch the Old School Baptists. They have given no ministry to the world, nor have they ever been able to furnish themselves with ministers. They have no factories under their charge for making either ministers or converts, they have no oil to give, even to those whose lamps have gone out; but we tell such to go rather to those who sell or traffic in that article, and buy for themselves.

When the great Head and Leader of the Old School Baptist church ascended on high, when he led captivity captive, he gave gifts to men, yea, he gave some apostles and teachers, &c., and these he crave not to the world, but to his church; for they preached themselves the servants of the church, for Christ’s sake; and he gave a charge to his church, if she

should discover a want of laborers at any subsequent period of her existence, to pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into his harvest, and *his* disciples have always obeyed him; for except ye deny yourselves, and take up your cross and follow him, ye cannot be his disciples; but then are ye his disciples indeed if ye do whatsoever he commands you. Such are the characteristics, and such the course of conduct by which the church shall be known on earth, while all anti-christian harlots shall be equally well known by their propensity to make void his laws, prerogatives and institutions, by their own traditions, while they shall as they at present do, teach for doctrines the commandments of men. That portion of the Baptist denomination involved in the charge of guilt for usurping the prerogative of giving to the world a ministry, are not the Old Regular Baptists, but they are the strange illegitimate creatures of means, which have come in by climbing up some other way, not by the door into the sheep fold; and our Master says they are thieves and robbers; and this being their character, it is not after all so very strange that they should attempt to steal away from us our name, and call themselves the Baptist denomination, while they manifest a disposition to rob Christ of his sceptre and his crown, and assume the work which he has reserved to himself to do. They alone can be guilty of giving a ministry to the world who have committed the outrage against the Divine Majesty. The writer seems however to attach the principle blame upon his brethren, for the quality of the ministers they have given, and seems to overlook the heaven-daring sin of their assuming the right to take this work out of Messiah’s hands. “Look at them!” he says, “they are pious, laborious men.” But piety is not holiness, all the old Scribes and Pharisees were pious; industry is not grace, the former were as laborious as the latter. But he further testifies, “As teachers, the majority are not well qualified.” Ah true, neither are the minority; for how can well qualified ministers of the gospel come to us from any source short of

our Lord Jesus Christ. “Few understand thoroughly their own language,” he says; this we do not doubt, for God confused their own language as long ago as when their fathers were engaged in the mighty enterprise of constructing a new way to heaven, and they have never recovered from the shock “A smaller number still (he says) know the original languages in which the bible is written, and consequently are unable to make critical comments on the word.” Really, so much truth from such a source, almost leads us to exclaim, “The dumb ass has spoken in a man’s voice!” to rebuke the false, hireling prophets, which the new school have given to the world. But we are happy to testify that the Old School Baptists have no such complaint to make of those whom our blessed Master has given his church. Look at them! They are men of experience, men of grace, all of them well quail fled; we do not mean to teach in the wisdom which the world teaches; but by demonstration of the spirit, to commend them. selves to every man’s conscience, in the sight of God. Yes, *well qualified,* precisely as the Lord would have them. Their feet are shod with the preparation of the gospel, they are not therefore afraid to tread on serpents and scorpions; their loins are girt about with truth: what better girdle could they have? The breast plate of righteousness; for a helmet, the hope of salvation, and above all, the sword of the Spirit; for their is some fighting to be done; and they are so well qualified, that, although they are of themselves very weakness itself, one of them shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight. These all understand thoroughly their own language, for the Lord has turned to them a pure language; it is the language of Canaan, no Jew and Ashdod sound, but the real gospel’s joyful sound. Their enemies can neither understand nor learn it; for they sing a song, and dwell upon a theme, which none but the hundred and forty and four thousand, and the innumerable company redeemed from the earth, who have the seal of God, can learn. They are taught by that Spirit which searcheth the

deep things of God, even the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. They are in the Old School of Christ made quite familiar with the original language in which the word was communicated to "holy men of old who spake."

They know little, and care less, about the dead languages; for God the Spirit has quickened them, and they are made alive, and a living language becomes them best; they are not given to the world, like those said to be given by the guilty church, spoken of in the article in the *Index;* but God's ministers are all given to the church, a living people of lively stones, a spiritual house, hence living preachers; and that word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever, is just what they want. These servants of God, and by his will servants of his church, are enabled to make critical comments on the word, and too critical, by far, to suit the notions of those learned novices which are pouring forth continually from colleges and theological schools; for their teacher has made them as wise serpents and harmless as doves, and should any emergency ever require of them any greater amount of wisdom, their teacher has pledged himself to be with them to the end, and they have only to ask it of him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. These are classical scholars all of them, all liberally educated; classical, for God has given them the tongue of the learned; liberally educated, being all taught of God, from the least to the greatest, and for their instruction they have never had to pay one cent. Thus we see, their rock is not our rock, our enemies themselves being judges.

There are many things in the article under consideration, on which we would remark if time and circumstances would admit. "Few" of those ministers which the writer says the church have been guilty of giving to the world, "understand the principles of spiritual interpretation, and not many are

qualified to build men up in the faith of the gospel after they are converted." However mortifying this confession may seem to the wire workers of the missionary machine, the concealed author has confessed more truth perhaps than he intended. We can subscribe to the truth of the above extract, when we have struck out, expunged, and drawn a black line around the word "few," and in the place thereof inserted the word none; for if the church or any other society on earth have ever given a solitary minister to the world, who possessed the above qualifications, we have not been aware of it. But we know that all the ministers God has given his church possess all necessary qualifications to shew themselves workmen approved of God, rightly dividing the word, &c.

But the writer of the article says of these deficient ministers, given to the world, "God called them." If he means the God of Israel, the assertion is false. They are called only by their god, and their god is their belly, and they invariably think that gain is godliness. We consider it a gross insult on heaven, to charge the Lord with calling an inefficient, unqualified and useless set of ministers to the work. "I have not sent them, yet they run," saith the Lord. Hence as the writer has shown, instead of these men looking to the Lord for support, and all needed grace and wisdom, they look to money, colleges, and theological institutions, to learn scientifically and mechanically, those lessons of preparation for the work of the gospel ministry, which can only be received, experimentally and efficiently from God, through the teaching of his Holy Spirit.

The third source of the writer's grief and that which wounds him deeper than all, is that the Baptists are remiss in the cause of education, and in this part of his lamentation, he joins the general *"howling of the shepherds,"* for he betrays his ignorance of the manner of learning, requisite to a

knowledge of the true God, and of spiritual things, and contends that the same instruction which makes the good statesman, makes the good minister. And concluding, with his brother Simon, that the gifts may be obtained for cash, calls loudly on Mammon to aid the new school in renovating the world, in politics and religion; and concludes his bitter wailing and gnashing in the following expressive words, viz:

“Are these things true? Then men and brethren, help! Help, I beseech you, help!”

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
February 9, 1838.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 412 – 420

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

So far as we know, there has never been a book compiled, giving the essential facts of the Baptist separation in 1832. Such a work, if ever completed, would reveal that one certain man, more than any other, was instrumental in clarifying the issues, which resulted in the division; that man was Gilbert Beebe. With limited space in one quarterly, we can give only a few highlights of this minister's life and the cause in which his life labors played such a great part.

Those who identify themselves today with the Old School Baptists ought to have some knowledge of the cause for their origin. History shows, even in this short sketch, that the real issues in any given moment are soon forgotten, and those who follow after are ignorant of the original issues. If the few who do have some historical knowledge, it is usually in the letter only. They can and do parrot certain phrases and words which were used in the early controversies, but the understanding of what was involved is limited indeed, if not even perverted.

It is not possible to acquire the same "faith" of our fathers by merely reading their biographies or their sermons and statements of be. If we - **the living** - ever possess the faith possessed by the dead, we must receive it from the same source they received it, namely, from God alone. We must also experience for ourselves what they experienced, and "through much tribulation."

BLACK ROCK ADDRESS

The difference that developed in the churches over the modern innovations culminated in a formal break between the parties of the New School and Old School Baptists. This division was spelled out in a declaration called "**The Black Rock Address.**" A meeting of "**Particular Baptists**" convened at Black Rock, Maryland, September 27, 1832.

In this famous address the issues were named and the reasons given for the action taken. The issues outlined were mainly, Tract Societies, Sunday Schools and Bible Societies, Mission Boards and societies, salaried ministry, theological schools, colleges or seminaries. Gilbert Beebe is credited with drafting the essentials of this address, which resounded through the churches throughout the United States.

At ten minutes before four o'clock p. m. on Monday, May 2, 1881, Elder Gilbert Beebe received his discharge and was called home to receive the crown laid up for those who have fought the good fight.

Elder Gilbert Beebe, at the time of his death, was the only surviving minister who was present at the notable convention at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, when the separation took place between the Missionary or New School and the Old School or Primitive Baptist churches. He oppose the innovations of the Missionary element at the gathering, and has ever since been the leading defender of the Old School Baptist cause. It was to further this cause that in the fall of 1832 he established at New Vernon the Signs of the Times, which was for many years the only organ of that faith.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Mr. Slauson, - in fulfillment of my promise, I will state some of the most important incidents of my life. I was born in the town (now city) of Norwich, Conn., on the 25th day of November, 1800. At a very early period, and as far back as my memory extends, I was seriously impressed with a solemn conviction of my sinful and lost condition as a sinner, and of the necessity of being "born again," to qualify me to see the kingdom of God. When, I think, from my best remembrance of the date, I was not more than seven or eight years old, I was made to hope and rejoice in God as my Savior, and to feel His love shed abroad in my heart. I think that at that tender age I was taught of God to know, what no other being could teach me, that "Salvation is of the Lord." From that hour I have had no confidence in the power of men to effect or help in the least to effect the salvation of a sinner. In 1811 I was baptized by Elder John Sterry, and received as a member of the Baptist Church in Norwich. This was many years before the division of the Missionary or Fullerite Baptists from the primitive order, and before any organized religious societies or institutions were known or tolerated in the Baptist denomination in our country.

In 1816 I came to the city of New York, and afterward became identified, by letter, with the Ebenezer Baptist Church, where I was called to exercise my gift, and was finally licensed to preach the gospel; this was about the year 1818. I then traveled in several States as an itinerant preacher, and supplied the Third Baptist Church in Baltimore three or four months in about 1821-2, but it suited my mind better to be traveling. I never failed to find places where I was well received, and without any support from missionary arrangement I was fully sustained, so that I could say as did

the disciples whom Jesus sent out without purse or scrip, when they returned, that I had lacked nothing.

...The division, or separation of the Missionary Baptists in these parts, from those of the old order, took place about forty years ago. I stand today rooted and grounded in the faith and order on which the whole Baptist denomination in our country stood when united with them sixty-five years ago. I have found no occasion to depart from either the faith or order of the church of God, as organized on the day of Pentecost. I cannot find by sixty years of careful and prayerful searching of the Scriptures, that those primitive saints who gladly received the word at Pentecost and continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, had any religious organizations or auxiliaries to the church of God, existing among them. No Mission Boards for converting the heathen or for evangelizing the world; no Sunday Schools as nurseries to the church; no schools of any kind for teaching theology or divinity, or for preparing young men for the ministry; no pious rehearsals of the "Melodies of Mother Goose" or "Jack Horner" or the "cow jumping over the moon," among the institutions of Christ or His apostles. I am content to be considered all of eighteen hundred and forty three years behind the progressive religious doings of the more popular religionists of the present time. I have never been identified with, nor have I had any fellowship for, any religious rites, forms, fashions or customs which cannot be found in the laws of Christ, and practice of the Apostles and primitive saints. I do not denounce those who differ with me in regard to these things; to their own masters they stand or fall; nor do I dispute that there are among them some of God's quickened children; that is not my province. "The Lord knoweth them that are His," and He can bring them out of their idolatry in His own good time. But while I live I expect to protest solemnly, soberly, but not with unkind or malicious feelings, against their spiritual wickedness in high places.

The Signs of the Times, as you are aware, has been published by me nearly forty-four years. During all this time it has been devoted to the defense of what my eternal destiny rests upon as the truth as it is in Jesus. My warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world.

My race is nearly run. I am now in the seventy-sixth year of my age. My voice will soon be silenced in death, my pen will pass into the hands of another, and I hope abler writer, but the eternal truth for which I have so long contended will be lasting as the days of eternity. And when all the deceptive and luring doctrines and institutions of men shall be exposed, and all who have trusted in a refuge of les shall bewail their folly and call for rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the presence of the Lamb, those who know and love the truth shall in the truth rejoice forevermore.

- Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., April, 1876

- From the brief autobiography of Gilbert Beebe, written at the request of Mr. Slauson, a newspaper editor, published after his death in the Signs of the Times, May 15, 1881. Also appears in Hassell's History, p. 934.

Elder Gilbert Beebe, of Middletown, N. Y., has had few equals, since the days of the apostles, in natural and spiritual abilities, in bold and faithful defense, both by tongue and pen, of great fundamental truths of the Scriptures, and in the extensiveness of his ministerial labors. During his long ministry of sixty-three years he is believed to have preached about 10,000 sermons and traveled about 200,000 miles - sent forth, not in the manner of the nineteenth century, by

"Missionary Funds," but in the manner of the first century, by the God of grace and providence, who supplied all his necessities; thus exhibiting to this materialistic, unbelieving age, a life of divine faith and support.

-Statement by Sylvester Hassell in his Church history, p. 822.

Through its [Signs] columns Elder Beebe's vigorous intellect and ready pen controlled the thought of the church, and held the wavering steadfast to the bulwarks of the faith. It is impossible to over-estimate the extent and power of the influence that he exerted, and it is safe to say that this great power could have been in no safer hands, for he knew no other motive than the right, and trusted implicitly in God for light and guidance.

His life was wholly consecrated to his Master's service. He was interested in and cared for nothing but the cause of Christ. During all the years of his pastorate he preached without salary, and so thoroughly was he absorbed in his higher and more important duties that his business interest often suffered by neglect. The amount of work that he performed was prodigious. It is estimated that in his ministerial work he traveled at least ten thousand miles a year...For nearly fifty years he preached regularly twice, and often three time on every Sunday, and often during the week; and nearly fifty years of this time he was sole editor of the Signs, preparing for its columns an amount of original material greater than is published in any other religious paper. He complied a hymn book, the first edition of which was published in 1859, and which has commanded a sale of 30,000 copies.

-Excerpt from an editorial obituary in the Middletown Daily Press.

I have heard many eloquent men. But I regarded Elder Beebe when at his full liberty as the most eloquent speaker I ever heard. I have heard him when the power of his eloquence was so overwhelming that it seemed as though nothing could stand before it. It was not merely in manner and language. It was in depth and breadth and truthfulness of thought.

- Silas H. Durand

As we said of a statesman of the past generation, so I feel to say of him; He was such a man, take him all in all, as we ne'er shall look upon his like again. It has been my privilege to serve with him as a son with his father nearly thirty-four years. Truly a great man has fallen in Israel; and he fell at his post, still feeding the flock, and still valiant in battle for their defense.

- E. Rittenhouse

Following are a few excerpts which are typical of Gilbert Beebe's ability to discover the evil and refute the errors of the whole of the Arminian trend.

PREFACE TO EDITORIALS

From the earliest settlement of our country by the Puritans in New England, and the Church of England in the Southern colonies, whose religious supremacy was established by law in their several localities, the Baptists, and indeed all other dissenting orders, suffered great oppositions by proscription and oppression from the dominant parties. The Baptists, perhaps, more than any other, were violently treated, and suffered the most cruel persecution. Disfranchisement as citizens, fines, confiscation of property, incarceration in prisons, and banishment for nonconformity, to which was added corporal punishments, public whippings at the stock, cropping of ears, boring their tongues through with hot irons, tying their heads and feet together, and torturing them in the most barbarous manner for days and nights, and in many cases they were put to death for their persistent and inflexible adherence to the faith and order of the gospel by which they were distinguished from all other orders. In those days of trial there were no worldly inducements offered to attract the worldly-minded to connect themselves with our churches, and there was harmony of sentiment and uniformity of practice among the Baptist churches throughout the whole breadth of our country.

When the violence of persecution began to abate, and by the interposition of the British Crown, and subsequently by the prevalence of more liberal views which were entertained by the patriots of the Revolution, the powers of the Puritans in the East, and of the Episcopalians in the South were so far curtailed as to prevent further corporal severities; still for many years after the establishment of our federal and state governments, the Puritans of the New England States were patronized by their state legislatures, and allowed to collect parish taxes from all within their parish limits. Afterwards

dissenters, by procuring certificates from religious denominations to which they belonged, certifying that they were paying to their own respective orders, were released from the burden of parish taxes, and finally the whole legal distinction in favor of the Puritans was abolished. Under all the trials and persecutions thus far experienced, the Baptists were a humble, meek, loving and harmoniously united people throughout our country. But as soon as this oppressive yoke was broken, Satan was ready with other elements of discord to bring trouble and divisions into our churches.

No sooner were the Baptists of America relieved from the galling yoke of Puritanic and Episcopalian priestcraft than the doctrines of Andrew Fuller were introduced with the professed design to raise up the Baptists from the dung-hill, to rank respectably with other religious denominations. All who were inclined to the doctrine of Arminianism, with many others who had been led but sparingly into an understanding of the cardinal doctrine of salvation alone by grace, were ready to embrace the plausible and deceptive views of Fuller, and became at once ambitious for the promised elevation. At this period, which is still fresh in the recollection of the editor of the Signs of the Times, there was not known among the Baptists of America a single organized institution in connection or under the patronage of the Baptists. Theological seminaries on a very small scale then began to be talked of, and a small school of this kind was started in Philadelphia, under the direction of Dr. Staughton, to give some grammar lessons to a few illiterate preachers, and soon a college was founded in Washington City, and another educational and theological institution at Hamilton, N. Y., and similar schools began to spring up in various directions. Simultaneously with these, missionary enterprises were set on foot, both domestic and foreign, and Sabbath schools and Sabbath school unions, in which various anti-Christian denominations were recognized as hand and glove with

Baptists in building up these unscriptural nurseries for the church, as they were modestly called. Then followed the Bible Societies, to give a semblance of piety to the whole system of religious machinery, followed in turn by Tract Societies, Temperance Societies, Mite Societies, Magdalene Societies, and a host of other equally unscriptural institutions under the name of Benevolence and Religion, until, to bring up the rear, the Abolition Society which had for a time been struggling into life and power under the patronage of a few New England fanatics, was with due ceremony let in and adopted as a pet institution.

While these innovations were being made upon the faith and order of the Baptists, true enough, the Baptists began to rise, according to the prediction of Andrew Fuller, and soon came to be regarded as unsound and as a respectable as any other of the worldly churches of this degenerate age. The Baptists were now no longer obliged to pray the Lord of the harvest to furnish preachers; they could supply themselves with a more refined and educated class from their own schools. Converts could now be made to order, and the churches supplied with members from their nurseries and other institutions. Their machinery was no so complete that grace was no longer needed to make their members orderly; for they were supplied with societies to keep them sober and benevolent; and if perchance many of them should lose their piety, their machinery was so ingeniously geared that they could run through again, and re-converted and re-constructed as often as might be thought advisable.

It was during the prevalence of these abominations that the Signs of the Times was commenced. The new order of Baptists had many religious newspapers in the field, which without an exception advocated these institutions named in the foregoing, and the general impression was entertained that there were no churches or preachers left that had not

enlisted in this new enterprise for worldly popularity and respectability. A few were found here and there, isolated and despised, who sighed and groaned on account of the prevailing abominations. Yet few as there were, and far between, we were denounced violently as illiberal, inert, slothful, behind the spirit of a progressive age, and enemies to the spread of the gospel, and opposed to all that is good.

Feeling deeply the need of a medium of correspondence, and excluded from the columns of the so-called Baptist papers, after much deliberation it was concluded to attempt to make ourselves a paper devoted to the case of truth, and through which we could enter our solemn protest against all the innovations, new theories and new institutions which, under the name of Baptists, had so greatly prevailed.

- From Introductory Preface to Gilbert Beebe's Editorials, 1868

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND CHURCH CREEDS

Since the Apostles of the Lamb have finished their course with us in the flesh, no history of the church of God should be allowed to lure us from the doctrine which they taught, the judgments they have recorded, the ordinances they have enjoined; nothing is to be added nor aught diminished from the perfect standard of faith and order they established, which is confirmed by all the valid authority of earth and heaven. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaved, and what they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. The question with us now is not or should not be, What was believed or practiced in the church one hundred or a thousand years ago? but, rather, What was the faith which was once delivered to the saints? We are not now to ask, Are our ministers by succession or ordination, through the dark ages of papal abominations, traceable to the apostles? but rather let it be asked, Are they such men as the Holy Ghost commanded the church to separate to the work whereunto He had called them?

...Not even in the history of the first century of the gospel church are we to look for a perfect rule for our faith and practice as disciples of our Saviour Jesus Christ; for while the apostles were still in the flesh, carnality was detected in the church at Corinth, heresy and witchcraft in the churches of Galatia, and dissensions at Antioch; and in the days of the Apostle John there were many antichrists which went out from the church because they were not of them. And Paul,

Peter and Jude admonished the saints that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. And even of the Elders who wept and feel on Paul's neck, because he had told them they should see his face no more, should men arise and speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. The primitive saints could only abide in the Apostles' fellowship as they continued steadfastly in their doctrine; they were allowed to follow no man only so far as they followed Christ. Can it then be safe for us to accept the usages or traditions of the church, or of any organization claiming to be the church, as a standard of faith or rule of practice, which have existed since the time the Apostles were in the flesh? If in the days of their sojourn on earth no church was perfectly free from defect, at what period from that to present time have any of the churches surpassed the primitive churches in purity? We have a more sure guide and directory. The doctrine, examples and precepts of God, alone are reliable. To them only are we exhorted to give heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the day star arise in our hearts.

-Extracts from an Editorial on Ecclesiastical History and Church Creeds, Signs of the Times, August 15, 1881. This was also the last editorial written by Gilbert Beebe. It appears on page 937 in Hassell's Church History.

We readily admit our opposition to the present system of Bible Societies as religious institutions for the conversion of the world; but we are so far from being opposed to the gratuitous circulation of the Bible, (without note or comment), that in the preceding number we have offered to supply a whole country at our own expense. We are opposed to Tract Societies, and we are ready to give reason of our opposition; but we are not opposed to the circulation of the

Bible truth in pamphlet, tract, newspaper, or any other form, gratuitously or otherwise.

We oppose such mission societies as are independent of the church of God, which we hold to be the only divinely authorized religious society upon earth; but we have, through the columns of a former number of this paper, offered to support the Lord's ministers or missionaries to the utmost of our ability, even to the dividing of our last loaf with such of them as go out without purse or scrip, relying upon the sure mercies of David, without waiting to get the Lord's promise endorsed by a Mission Board. We feel disposed to let such as have hired themselves out to Missionary Boards stand or fall to their own master, knowing that his servants they are, to whom they yield themselves to obey. We consider all that a kind Providence has put into our possession belongs to the Lord, and as His steward we are ready to deal it out to His servants according to His word....

- Editorial Remarks, April 10, 1833

How astonishingly rapid is the advancement of priestcraft and clerical power among the Baptists of the present day. Never, until the present, has anti-Christ appeared so conspicuously to flourish under the Baptist name. Never, until the present, have the saints so fully and fearfully realized the apostolic prediction, "Even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandise of you; whose judgment now a long time lingereth not." (2 Peter 2:1, 3) Can it be doubted that these men who assume to be teachers, divinely authorized to teach young men the science of preaching, and the arts of modern

machinery, are pointed out by the apostle as false teachers? Or who can doubt that these are teaching damnable heresies, who in the second of the above resolutions are teaching that "it is the duty of every disciple of Christ to make temporal sacrifice to promote the eternal salvation of men!" This sentiment, glaring as it is, is set down as a given point with them, and seems to be the very ground and pillar of their faith; remove this pillar and down their entire system must fall.

Now if it be the duty of the disciples of Christ to promote, or aid Jehovah in the eternal salvation of men, we ask, On what page in the Bible is the obligation recorded? Or in what respect, or respects is God deficient that we should need the aid of His saints in the promotion of eternal salvation of men? Will the diviners of the Ministerial Conference inform us what proportion of eternal salvation is of works, and what of grace? How much depends on the saints, and how much the Lord intends to do Himself? Should those learned sages condescend to answer our enquiries, they will please to recollect that we have been in the habit of believing that the eternal salvation of me, i.e., all that God ever designed to save, was beyond the reach of being promoted by our temporal sacrifices.

We read that God "hath saved us and called us with an holy calling; not according to works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus (before the world began)." Hence it appears to be quite too late for us to promote that which was accomplished before the world began. We would have them inform us to whom these temporal sacrifices are to be made? They cannot be of God, for He is full of burnt offerings; and "sacrifices and offerings He would not, " says the Lamb of God, "because He has no pleasure in them." He also said, "Go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice."

Hence it cannot be our duty to disobey God, and offer sacrifices to him in violation of His express command.

Is it then divine justice that calls for temporal sacrifices to promote eternal salvation? If so, how much must be added to the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, which through the eternal Spirit He offered up to God, in order to secure the eternal salvation of the elect? But should we be told that the sacrifice of our Lord secured the eternal salvation of the elect, and that He by one offering or sacrifice (not temporal) hath forever perfected them that are sanctified. Heb. 10:14. We would ask those knowing ones of Hamilton Theological Seminary how many of the non-elect can be eternally saved by the offering of temporal sacrifices? Again, since it is written, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."

For what are these temporal sacrifices to be made? And how are they to promote the eternal salvation of men? If the eternal salvation of man may be promoted by our temporal sacrifices, surely the cattle upon a thousand hills would be a glorious offering, and ten thousand rivers of oil would be an offering of great magnitude. But perhaps these ministers will say we have mistaken their design, and misinterpreted their sayings, and that their object is only to awaken the saints to a sense of their duty touching the temporal concerns of the church. If this be all, why tell them to make temporal sacrifices "for the promotion of the eternal salvation of men?"

Is salvation of the Lord? And if it is, can that eternal salvation which is of the Lord be promoted by men? And if it can, why did the apostle say, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast," etc. (Eph. 2)

- Editorial Remarks on the Ministerial Conference, Sept. 25, 1833

HOLY ALLIANCE

Under the above head, the editor of the Repository - has informed his readers that there exists an alliance between God and His people, and that God has laid aside that power which works without means, and has devolved upon His people a course of duty, etc. This doctrine of "Holy Alliance" has been preached before. But that God has laid aside His divine omnipotence, or that "power which works without means," and has substituted in the room thereof the duty of His people or allies, is truly astonishing; but we are told that this change in the immutable God is intended for a glorious and magnificent purpose - nothing less than the conversion of the world. How astonishing! that the immutable God should at this late hour undertake the conversion of the whole world, when a portion of them are already suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; and still more strange, that just as He is about to commence this new enterprise He should dispense with His omnipotence, immutability and truth, laying aside the former, and violating the two latter, in order to give the mighty creature man an opportunity to help his God. This doctrine is as new as it is strange, and as strange as it is false and blasphemous. He further tells us that God has said to His people, "Occupy till I come; Go preach the gospel to every creature; I send you not alone, you are an ally, and lo, I am with you always; and while you are preaching and praying, My grace shall be sufficient to sustain you, and My Spirit shall give efficacy to the word of salvation. In what part of the Bible, or by what manner of revelation he has collected his authority for this doctrine, he has not informed us.

The words, "Occupy till I come," are a part of one of our Lord's parables. But this scripture no more implies the doctrine of the "Holy Alliance" than the commission given to the apostles by our Lord Jesus Christ, "Co preach the gospel," etc. applies to all the people of God indiscriminately. The words, "You are an ally," and "while you work, I will work," are not recorded in the volume of truth; but they have been added to the words of prophecy of God's holy book, in all probability by him of whom it is written, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in the book. (Rev. 22:18)

From an editorial on the subject of "Holy Alliance" by Gilbert Beebe, April 10, 1833.

"The wind bloweth where it listeth," in spite of all the exertions of a means-using generation; it is sovereign in its course; none can change it, nor effectually resist it. Who will dare say that the natural wind is more powerful or more sovereign than the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost has listed in the work of quickening all the elect of God. 'It is the Spirit that quickeneth," etc. Not all the power that can be, can alter the course of the divine Spirit from the elect of God to the reprobate part of mankind. As it has listed, so it does, and so it will continue to quicken every one that is born of the Spirit, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Again, the Spirit in this work is sovereign, as it relates to the individual on whom it operates. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; He commands and it is done. Not as some would blasphemously represent the Spirit, in the attitude of a beggar, or a supplicant before the sinner's heart, wooing, beseeching, and striving to get the sinner's consent, and in many, or in any ease, getting discouraged and abandoning the undertaking. Would this be blowing where it listed? Surely not. They can possess no adequate idea of the Spirit, or of its work, who suppose that the number of the

quickened shall be in proportion to the amount of means employed by mankind, or that protracted meetings, anxious benches, submission chairs, benevolent religious societies, (so-called), or any other human inventions can change the sovereign course of the eternal Spirit from any of those on whom it has listed, or engaged to apply the atoning blood of Jesus experimentally, or add one to the number of those originally "ordained to eternal life"; "predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will." If, then, we admit the sovereignty of the work of the Holy Ghost in the new birth, why talk about the use of means to produce it? If it depends upon the performance of conditions, or the use of means on our part, theme the Holy Ghost ceases to be a sovereign in the work, and all must turn at last upon the pivot of works, and our Bible must be forced to read, It is of him that willeth, and of him that runneth, and not of God that sheweth mercy. Could anything be more absurd?

Editorial on the New Birth, Sept. 11, 1833.

A NEW TRANSLATION

Forasmuch as the world is making rapid progress in arts and sciences, and the old-fashioned doctrine of the cross is left so far in the background, and as the style, and more particularly the principles, of the Old and New Testaments are so poor and vague, and so illy suited to the refined taste and feelings of this enlightened generation, and as there is noticing recorded in that book in support of the doctrine and practice peculiar to the present day, and as the ambitious and learned of our age are put to great inconvenience from time to time to prove that they are of God, or employed in His service, and as we cannot reasonably expect that the learned, wealthy and great men of this world will be willing to embrace the religion of Him who was meek and lowly in its present form. Therefore we have been led to suggest a few alterations and perversion of that holy book; which would, in our opinion, greatly subserve the cause of those who lie in wait to deceive.

BOOK OF PERVERSIONS, Chapter 1

1. Be ye conformed to the world, and be ye not transformed

2. If the light that be in you came from Theological Seminaries, how great is that light!

3. Go ye into all the world and beg money; he that believeth on you and giveth liberally shall have his charity sounded far abroad in the newspapers.

4. Say ye to him that giveth current money, It shall be well with him; but woe to him that giveth not; call him an Antinomian, a covetous fellow, a publican and a sinner.

5. Go ye into all the world and establish Sunday Schools; and in them mould the minds of the children to your views, and so prepare them for the polls of your country, that succeeding generations may be provided with rulers, from the President down to the past-master, whose religious characters have been formed in your Sunday Schools; and then verily you shall have your reward.

6. Go ye into all the world and circulate tracts, and take up collections for the support of Tract Societies, and so enable the officers and agents of that institution to fare sumptuously every day.

7. Go ye into all the world and plead for the Missionary cause But when ye go, take with you purse and scrip, and many coats, and splendid outfits, with men servants, and maid servants, and horses, and chariots and plenty of

money.

8. Say ye unto the people, The race is unto the swift, and the battle is unto the Strong.

9. Tell them the Lord's temple must be built by might, and by strength, and by the use of means, and not by the Spirit of the Lord.

10. Tell them that the want of money is the root of all evil; and that the heathen may be evangelized and saved for three dollars each.

11. Say unto them, Ye are redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold.

12. It is of him that willeth and him that runneth. For the Missionary Societies have willed, and their hirelings have run; and it is not of Him that sheweth mercy.

13. Receive ye honor of one another. Be ye called Rabbi, Doctor of Divinity, Master of Arts, Reverends, Presidents, Vice-Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers, Agents and by all flattering titles; for the laborer is worthy of his hire.

14. And when there cometh into your assemblies one who is rich, with costly apparel, say unto him, Come up hither; peradventure he will give you of his abundance. But if a poor man come in, tell him to sit down there on your footstool.

15. Be ye active in forming all manner of societies, in the name of religion; and sell ye birthrights for money and for price.

16. Tell the people (and make them believe it if you can), that you have charge of the Lord's treasury, and that He has

sent you to collect funds for Him; and that He is at present greatly straitened for want of cash to carry on His purposes.

17. And when you get the people's money, in the Lord's name, be ye mindful and divide it among yourselves; for ye must have your reward.

18. True religion, and undefiled before men like yourselves, is to visit the widow and fatherless, and to extort from them the last farthing they possesses, and then make your boast of it in public prints; so shall ye glory in your shame.

Editorial by Gilbert Beebe, Oct. 9, 1833.

A SHORT SERMON ON WINE

"DRINK no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities." - *Paul to Timothy*

UNPOPULAR as this text may appear in this day of religious reform, in which the scriptures have fallen so far behind the spirit of the age, we have nothing of popularity at stake, may venture a few remarks upon it without the fear of losing the favor of the reformers of the day.

Paul, the writer of the text, was an inspired apostle, and wrote as he was directed by the Holy Ghost. Timothy was a minister of the gospel, and a bishop or elder of the church of Christ at Ephesus. It was therefore proper that Paul, as one of the twelve judges of the twelve spiritual tribes, should instruct Timothy how he ought to behave himself in the house of God.

From the text we learn that Timothy was a man of frequent infirmity, and from the fact infer that although gospel ministers are required to be sound in the faith and practice of the gospel, they are men of bodily infirmity like all the rest of mankind.

Timothy could not be temperate in all things, unless he discontinued the use of water and used a little wine. We do not know that Paul required a tetotal abstinence from water; but he evidently believed that water was more injurious to the health of Timothy than wine would be; he therefore directed a discontinuance of the former and the use of a ***little*** of the latter.

Paul did not in this case, or in any other case, direct the use of ***much wine***; but elsewhere forbids that the saints should be drunken with wine, wherein there is excess.

From the above considerations we infer that there is a very wide difference between the views of Paul and those of the modern false apostles of our age, as the latter hold that the use of intoxicating drinks, to any extent, is a moral sin; that they are not to be used in any case, to any extent whatever, without involving guilt and sin on the part of the person or persons using it. Paul, however, held with his Lord, that the use, ***not abuse***, of all things was lawful and expedient, and all things were to be received and used by the saints with thanksgiving. Had our Lord regarded the use of intoxicating liquors as a sin, is it consistent to believe that he would have given Israel wine as a blessing, or directed the children of Israel to buy wine and strong drink; or would our Savior have changed the ***pure element of water*** into such wicked stuff as ***wine***, and then, after the people had already well drank, caused the better wine to be served to the governor and the feast? Had our Lord approved of the doctrine of modern tetotal abstinence, would he have been called a ***wine-bibber*** or ***wine drinker*** ?

Again we infer, that the modern theory is not only without a divine warrant in the sacred pages, but is absolutely in opposition to the revealed laws of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Any person, therefore, connected with the church of God, who shall violate the laws of Christ, by uniting in modern societies which are hostile to his laws, are guilty of disorder, and should be labored with as offenders; and if not reclaimed, excluded, as in all other cases of walking disorderly.

In rejecting the inventions of men on this subject, and adhering strictly to the bible, let no one suppose us to

advocate an excessive, or even habitual use of wine, or other intoxicating drinks; such is not the fact, either in theory or in our practice. But we do believe, and maintain, that the bible is a full, perfect and infallible guide for the children of God. They were no countenance the excessive use of wine or strong drink, or of any thing else; but they direct that we should use all things bestowed upon us by a bountiful providence, as not abusing them. It is a reflection on the wisdom and goodness of God, for men to attempt an improvement of the divine rule. The church is required to withhold her fellowship from drunkards; and if any in our connection become intemperate in eating, or drinking, or otherwise, they are to be put away, if they cannot be reclaimed by gospel measures. it is disgraceful, and abominably wicked, for christians to indulge in an unbecoming use, or we would rather say, ***abuse***, of what God has given us. Any person who cannot be reclaimed from intemperate habits, by gospel discipline, from a sense of their allegiance to their heavenly King, by the love of God dwelling in their hearts, by a sense of gospel order, by a desire to walk circumspectly, ought to be put away from the communion and fellowship of the church of Christ. To sustain them in the church by any other constraint than that found in the New Testament, is a perversion of the laws of Christ, and involves the sin of retaining in church connection, such as the laws of Zion have commanded us to put away. We care not for the slang of the enemy, in slanderously reporting us as wine-bibbers, gluttons, &c.; for so they accused our Lord; but when any of the household of faith give occasion to the enemy, to reproach them on this ground, it is trying indeed; therefore, suffer the word of exhortation.

Dear brethren, let us abstain from all appearance of evil; let us live soberly, righteously and godly in the present world. And although we are not at liberty to allow any man to judge us in meats, or in drinks, or in regard to a holy day, let us, as

children of the light, as the followers of the Lamb, as the disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, deny ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and endeavor to show an ungodly generation that we, by the laws of Christ alone, are taught to walk worth of the high vocation wherewith we are called. If our infirmities (we don't mean depraved appetites) require strong drink, there is no more harm in using it moderately, than mil or bread; providing we use it lawfully; and it is as great a sin for us to refuse it when, like Timothy, our sickness, or natural infirmity requires it, as to refuse any other temporal blessing that God has given us. It is not in drinking a ***little wine*** that the evil lies; but in carnal indulgence, which inculcates an appetite for still greater indulgence, and so leads on to actual intemperance. In the use of wine and other strong drink, there is perhaps a much greater danger of cherishing an immoderate thirst, than in the use of many other things; we are therefore to be the more guarded - to use it with the greater caution; and if we cannot use it without exciting an inclination to use it excessively, it is our duty, as christians, to abandon the use of it altogether. By the same rule which required Timothy to discontinue the use of water, because it was detrimental to his health, we are required to abstain from wine and strong drink, when our infirmities require water instead of wine.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
June 1, 1840

By Elder Gilbert Beebe

ASSAULT AND DEFENSE.

THE editor of the *Cross and Journal* has, in a late number of that paper, once more called the attention of his readers to the "Signs of the Times." He appears somewhat alarmed to find that the Old School Baptists are much pleased with our paper, and in order, as we suppose, to convince them of their wrong, he has made a few extracts from us, embracing our declaration of war against the Mother Arminianism, and her entire brood of institutions; and a part of an article from the editorial department of the first number of our progressing volume, together with a part of brother Charles Polkinhorn's letter, all of which he has interspersed with remarks of his own.

In regard to our declaration, we expected no less from Mr. S. and his brotherhood, than that they, as dutiful children, would stand forth and defend the old lady. Indeed we were enabled at an early period to predict that her whole family would take up arms in her defense. Mr. S., however, is not satisfied to come out against us in her name alone, but would call to his aid a reinforcement by giving a wrong version of our declaration, and so rendering our language as to make us mean not only the Mother Arminianism, and her brood of institutions, but also all such as are engaged in labors of benevolence, with all who adhere strictly to the confession of faith republished by the Philadelphia Baptist Association many years ago. TQ this version of our language we can by no means agree. Our warfare is not against any who adhere to the doctrine and order laid down in the Philadelphia Confession of Faith, although we claim nothing short of the scriptures of eternal truth as our standard; yet we believe that the Philadelphia Confession, with perhaps a very few exceptions, is in accordance with the scriptures. And let it not be forgotten that the document gives not the least

countenance to the various moneyed institutions of the present day. That summary was drawn up by Old Fashioned Baptists, and was originally written centuries prior to the existence of any of the modern money-begging schemes which at this day overwhelm our denomination. It is very true, as Mr. S. insinuates, we claim no allegiance to John Calvin, nor does the mere profession of any person, whose doctrine and practice are Arminian, of being Calvinistic, or of attachment to the doctrine of the Philadelphia Confession, or of the bible itself, shield the hypocrite from our strictures.

Again, Mr. S. seems to flounce because we quoted Titus i. 13, to show our authority for *rebuking them sharply.* The force of this scripture he seems willing to evade. He thinks it not applicable to those whom we denominate the Family of Arminianism, because spoken of the heathen, who were said to be "incessant liars, evil beasts, slow bellies, &c., and to every good work reprobate." We were perfectly well aware that such was the character given by the apostle, of the Cretans of whom he was then writing, and equally well satisfied that the same language with equal force applies to all who occupy the same ground on which the ancient Cretans stood. The Cretans, heathen though they were, did, like those against whom our war is waged, profess to know God; but in works they denied him. Could the pen of divine inspiration command more appropriate words to express the true character of those who at this day fill the ranks of Arminianism and her brood. If the editor of the *Cross* can point out one of the above characteristics, which is not visible, and indelibly marked in the forehead of her anti-christian highness, and which may not be found in the right hand of her entire brood, we shall rejoice to hear from him. Do not the class of whom we speak *always* prove themselves liars when they tell the people that the Lord has sent' them to collect money to replenish his treasury, or that the Lord's treasury, (which is Christ, for in him are hid all the

treasures,) is exhausted? Do they not incessantly lie when they represent that they are Old Fashioned Baptist Predestinarians, and just what the Baptists have been in ages long gone by? Say, Mr. Stevens, do they tell the truth when, for the sake of extorting money, jewels, &c., from the females of our country, they affirm that "some, yea many, precious souls might have been saved from the quenchless fires of bell, where now they must perish eternally, had you (the American ladies) not been afraid of being thought unfashionable, and not like other folks"? And if they are guilty of constantly affirming these things, with many others as destitute of truth as were your words when you represented us at war with benevolence, or with those who are laboring in any work of benevolence, are they not incessant liars, evil beasts, like those with whom Paul, after the manner of men, fought at Ephesus? including no doubt the strong bulls of Bashan, which gaped upon David with their mouths, (Psa. xxii. 12,) "the boar out of the wood," (Psa. lxxx. 13,) together with the he goats which Daniel saw, the sleepy, dumb and greedy dogs, of whom Isaiah says, "They can never have enough," and which the Bevelator tells us are without the city, and of whom Paul says, "Beware; these are all evil beasts, slow bellies"? They have been feeding upon the fat of the flock aver since the days of Ezekiel, (Ezek. xxxiv. 3,) and are not yet satisfied, but remain as craving as ever. "They are also defiled in mind, corruption breaks forth therefrom continually, and in conscience. Paul tells us of some of this class whose consciences are seared with a hot iron; disobedient. "Being disobedient whereunto also they were appointed, and unto every good work reprobate. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."

They profess that they know God. Very little injury would they be able to effect were they not professors of religion, but in works they deny him. It is a remarkable truth that no

man can know the Lord in reality and remain ignorant of the fact that it is virtually denying him, when by their work they pay no respect to the supremacy of his laws, but like Israel, when they had no king, do every man that which seems good in his own eyes. And like carnal Israel again, who, while professing a knowledge of the true God, caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech; which service, ardently pious as it was, did not please the Lord, for God had never required it at their hands; hence it could be viewed in no other light than that of a denial of the God whose they professed to be, and whom they pretended to adore. See Jer. xxxii. 35. When the editor of the *Cross* will prove to us the existence of a race of heathen to whom the distingnishing characteristics of the Cretians will more appropriately apply than to Arminianism and her brood, then we will be prepared to admit that we were in error in applying the apostolic charge where we did.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
April 8, 1836.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 295 – 299

ASSOCIATIONS

It is to us, at all times, a matter of no small joy, to witness a disposition on the part of our brethren, to examine the divine rule, and to inquire at the sacred oracle for the validity of every institution of our religious practice. The attention of several of our dear brethren, in these parts and elsewhere, has lately led to the subject of Associations, and it will be seen that the result of their investigation, thus far, has not produced a unanimity of sentiment on the subject. Some are of the opinion that the New Testament provides neither precept or example for them, and other some conceive that the assembly which convened at Jerusalem, on the question from the Antioch church, amounts at least to an example. We have listened with a good degree of interest to the arguments thus far brought forward, pro and con; and without designing to check the discussion of so important a point, we esteem it our privilege to offer our brethren a few remarks which have occurred to us, on the subject, in doing which we shall probably accord, in part, and in some things differ from all who have furnished us with their views.

In the first place we admit that what we call "Associations," are, or are not divine institutions; they are, or are not directly and positively warranted in the New Testament. If from the Scriptures we can show them to be divinely instituted, and precept and example given for their observance by the church, then we must consider no church complete and independent, or walking in all the ordinances blameless, which do not stand in such connection associated with other churches; and if on a careful examination we find that what we denominate "associations" are not divinely authorized, we must admit (painful as it may be) that we have and do observe a religious practice, for which there is

no "Thus saith the Lord;" and we may be subjected to the fearful interrogative, "Who hath required this at our hand?"

But to the merits of the question. Are they from heaven, or of men? We have failed to see with some of our brethren whom we love, that the assembly referred to at Jerusalem, furnishes the least testimony in support of what we denominate "Associations;" and if we can produce no other, or more tenable ground for them, we shall be disposed to give them up, notwithstanding our feelings are strongly, very strongly, enlisted in favor of them. Without going minutely into the comparison of modem associations, with the meeting at Jerusalem, we will observe a few particulars which to us present serious discrepancies. First, those who form *our* modern associations are Elders and brethren, sent by their respective churches, as messengers, or what is by far more exceptionable, delegates.

The meeting at Jerusalem, was not composed of messengers, or delegates from the churches, but *the apostles and Elders came together for to consider this matter.* (Acts 15:6) And the whole church, not delegates from the church (see verse 22,) and the Holy Ghost, (verse 28). But our modern Associations are not composed of apostles, the Holy Ghost, and the whole church. The regulations of many associations of our acquaintance, restricts the churches in regard to the number of messengers to be sent. We have said this council at Jerusalem was not composed of messengers from churches represented in that meeting. True there were messengers (not delegates) present from the church at Antioch, but let it be observed these formed no part of the council, but were merely messengers of Antioch church, to the council and other messengers of their own company (verse 22) bore the message of the Holy Ghost, the apostles and elders and the whole church, to Antioch. How our brethren can make this meeting an example for modern

associations, without involving the right of associations to rule in judgment, if not in legislation over the churches, we are unable to perceive; yet all our brethren agree that the churches are the highest religious body on earth, and contend earnestly for the *independence of the churches.*

Another discrepancy which we would notice as we pass; as being, in our judgment, no less formidable than the foregoing, is that the council at Jerusalem was not, nor did it pretend to be, a constituted body, independent of, or separate from the church, having a written constitution and by-laws for their special regulation; and a body to be continued, and to hold annual sessions for business, to impose yokes and grant exemption from burdens, from time to time, as might seem good to them and their successors in all subsequent ages. The apostles, seated on the twelve thrones, for the express purpose of judging the spiritual tribes, the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to write the law of the new covenant in the hearts of the spiritual family, and the church, which is divinely empowered and qualified to judge angels, assembled as they were, certainly were in possession of power which would not become us, in what we call "associations."

The wretched work of New School Baptist associations in arrogating such powers as were exercised by the council at Jerusalem, has very justly excited great alarm among our old fashioned brethren. While the former have attempted to rank and file, or mark the ground of distinction observed by all anti-christian bodies, of clergy and laity, and in their assumed consequence have attempted to legislate for the Zion of God, to take into their hands the destiny of the world, the direction of those acknowledged as God's ministers, and appoint the field of their labors, the term of their services, and the manner and amount of their reward: meeting from year to year, binding heavy burdens, grevious to be borne,

and binding them on men's shoulders. Now they resolve that one thousand dollars shall be raised from their churches for the home mission, alias, to send Arminians out to trouble and distress the peaceable churches of the Mississippi valley; but mark us! they themselves touch not these burdens with one of their fingers, to bear any share of the burden. We might continue to trace the unhallowed consequences resulting from this sort of associations, for truly they have caused the saints to howl, until their cry has come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabbath, Who is, we trust, about to deliver them.

After what we have written our readers may suppose that we renounce associations *in to to,* but such is not the fact; for while we wash our hands from *all such associations as we have described above,* we hold most sacred and dear the *association of the children of God,* upon Gospel ground; and while we deny the divine authority of any *constituted religious body,* except the church of God, as such, we are prepared to show from the practice of the primitive saints, that it is proper, lawful and expedient that the saints should *associate together,* for social worship, for correspondence, for mutual edification and instruction in righteousness, and for the promotion of that christian fellowship and Gospel union which is like the oil which was poured on Aaron's head, and like the dew of Hermon which descended upon the mountains of Zion, &c.

Where the object of our Old School brethren in coming together is to worship God, and to inquire after the welfare of Zion, and to encourage each other in walking in all the ordinances and commandments of Christ blamelessly, we say to all such, where providence permits us to attend, "Entreat us not to leave thee. Thy people shall be our people, and thy God shall be our God. Where thou livest, let us live," &c.

If any, or all of our associations have been led off from the simplicity of the Gospel track, let them correct the wrong, renounce it and flee from it. But to cease from "christian correspondence" among the churches which are in fellowship, would be to run into as great an error as that from which they attempt to fly. We should not contend for constitutions, or anything which would have a tendency to characterize associations *as an organized, or standing body, apart from the church;* yet we conceive that a full understanding of the *terms of correspondence,* or association, is essential, and should be agreed to, reduced to writing and published in order to prevent, as far as possible, the amalgamation of heterogeneous materials in such religious assembles.

There can be no lack of Scriptural testimony that the primitive churches of Christ kept up a correspondence, and that the disciples were in a habit of mingling together for religious worship, and mutual edification, wherever, and whenever opportunity served; and such meetings we would call "associations." They, however, being not so parliamentary in their forms of communicating with each other as modern professors are, could generally proceed to worship, or to edify, without waiting to elect by ballot a Chairman, or President (Moderator) and being minute men, could even preach an introductory sermon without being appointed for that purpose twelves months in advance!

In regard to corresponding meetings, on the principle of those held at Occoquan, and at Bethlehem, Virginia, within the last two years, and referred to by brother Chrisman, in his late communications on associations; we had the pleasure of attending the latter, and was highly gratified with the order, harmony and Gospel union which was abundantly manifested on that occasion.

A very general sifting has commenced among some of the professedly Baptist churches and associations; there are many of the former as well as of the latter of these, with whom we *could not walk in fellowship* a few years ago, among whom the missionary fever has been raging like a pestilence; but *now we behold them emerging from that corruption* which then obscured their glory, and *taking their places among the regular churches of our communion:* and while a redeeming spirit pervades our associations, and those connected with them are seriously inquiring for the old paths, may we not hope they will soon *shake off every human device, and every unscriptural practice,* and shine forth in unsullied splendor, in the glorious truth and order of the Gospel of Christ.

The primitive churches on various occasions, sent messengers to *deliver messages, contributions, &c., for them.* It is therefore lawful for Old School churches to send their messengers to report their welfare, for the comfort of sister churches, and to bring back word of the prosperity of the cause, among such sister churches. Such messengers, when assembled with a sister church, may unite in worship, in preaching, and in the general improvement of all the gifts among them. Such a meeting we would call an "association," and against such associations we conclude there is no law.

In the foregoing we have given some of our views on the subject. Our columns are open for the views of our brethren, judiciously written, on the same subject; we recommend moderation and free discussion. Let us prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

Elder Gilbert Beebe, 1838

ASSOCIATIONS

Among the various religious denominations where churches are formed into what are called associations, there is much difference in regard to the subject of ecclesiastical power vested in them. But as the enquiries of our correspondent relate exclusively to those of the Old School Baptists, we will confine our remarks to them. But as we are not authorized to define the views of all Old School Baptists on the subject, we will not hold any of them responsible for such views as we may give; but we will only say that the following views are substantially what we understand to be the views of the Old School Baptists generally.

An Old School Baptist Association is a community of Old School Baptist churches, harmoniously agreeing in faith and practice, who, for the purpose of general edification, and correspondence, and to strengthen each others hands, and for mutual comfort, agree or covenant together, that they will meet together periodically, as often as they may agree, by messengers - bearing letters from the several churches, certifying the due appointment of the messengers, and giving information of the state and condition of the churches, of their steadfastness in the faith and order of the gospel, of their general prosperity or adversity - that they may participate in each others joys and griefs as the case may be. This association, or intercourse, is to be kept up so long as all the several churches may continue to walk together in fellowship and harmony. No church of our order is required to unite in this arrangement, to entitle them to our fellowship as all must be in fellowship before they can be admitted into the arrangement.

All Old School Baptist Associations, so far as our knowledge extends, assert emphatically the independence of the

churches as such, and disavow the right of the association to interfere with their acts of church discipline. We claim that the power is vested in every church of Christ to discipline her own members according to the rule given in the New Testament, without the interference of any other religious body on earth. Or, in other words, that the church of Christ, when acting according to the word and spirit of Christ, is the highest court under heaven, and from her decisions there is no court of appeals divinely authorized on earth.

Nevertheless, if any church, either in or out of any such associational compact, shall manifestly depart from the faith or order of the New Testament, the association, and every orderly church, and every individual disciple, may, and is in duty bound, to withdraw, and withhold their fellowship from such disorderly church, as they should from every disorderly brother, until they shall be restored to gospel order.

Associations being intended to facilitate christian correspondence, generally hold correspondence also with sister associations, so long as they are satisfied that they are of one heart and of one mind; and for this purpose they interchange letters of correspondence, in which they severally publish their understanding of the faith and order of the gospel, and by the interchange of ministers and messengers they compare their views carefully from time to time, each association holding the right to drop the correspondence with any association which, in their judgment, has departed from the faith and order of the gospel. In short, the associations have the same right and are under the same obligation in their associated capacity as each individual composing it has, to withdraw from every brother, or church that walks disorderly, but no more; while the authority to adjudicate the case of any brother or sister that may be accused of disorder belongs to the church to which he or she belongs.

Every church, however, while rightfully claiming her conceded right to transact her own business independently of associations - other churches or councils, if she desires to be recognized as walking orderly, will feel desirous of the concurrence of sister churches in her judgment in each case, lest confidence in her order should be shaken, and fellowship impaired.

Universally we have found the maxim of our Lord fully verified; He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be manifest that they are wrought of God; while it is equally certain that they who do wrong shun the light, lest their deeds should be reproved.

There is a courtesy due from every church to sister churches where cases occur which affect other churches, as in acts of discipline in relation to ministers, deacons, and other prominent members who frequently visit sister churches to seek for a concurrence of judgment in all such cases. But churches actuated by the least humility and christian meekness are the most apt to put themselves upon their dignity - and refuse all friendly advice in such cases and often much to their own injury; while those churches most desirous of keeping the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace being most jealous of their ability to act, desire to avail themselves of all the counsel of brethren in whom they have confidence.

We are no advocate of Ecclesiastical Councils (so called) to sit as a court over the church, as no church has a right to shift off the responsibility of her acts upon any such unscriptural body, but we do believe that it is in perfect harmony with the spirit and the letter of the Word for churches, in all difficult matters which are likely to involve their standing in the eyes of their sister churches, to secure, as far as possible, the advice (not dictation) of faithful

brethren from abroad, and after considering their advice duly, to act for themselves.

We have thus far indulged in some general remarks, and much more might be written on the subject, but we will come more directly to the case supposed by the enquirer after the Truth.

The case as stated supposes a preacher, having a standing as pastor in an Old School Baptist Church which is associated with other churches professing the same faith and order, has fallen into error in faith or practice, so that a portion of the church of which he is a member cannot fellowship him, but the majority of the church, because they sustain him in his error, is it necessary that all other churches of the association act with the disorderly minister because his disorder is endorsed or winked at by a majority of the church?

Our judgment on this supposition is that the churches being associated or unassociated, providing they have recognized each other as sister churches, makes no difference. If the righteous decision of a gospel church, walking in unquestionably gospel order, is final, and no other church has any right to annul or interfere with it, it does not follow that if a church depart from the order of the gospel in sustaining a disorderly pastor, that other churches are bound to endorse or respect their unrighteous decisions, for that would rob orderly churches of their independence, and give undue power to disorderly churches to drag others into their disorder.

Individual members, or minorities of churches, ought to be exceedingly cautious of taking ground against the judgment of the majority - lest they become factious, unruly, heady, high minded, and contentious. But there may be cases where it is their duty to dissent from the action of the majority. And

the case supposed above, if correctly stated, we think is undoubtedly one. We hold that no church act, whether passed by a majority or a minority, or even if it be unanimous, can be binding unless it be dictated by the spirit and letter of the divine rule. When, therefore, whole churches, or associations of churches, depart from the faith and order of the gospel they are (if they cannot be reclaimed) to be dropped from the connection of all orderly churches, associations and brethren. How can we walk together if we be not agreed? When a minister departs from the divine rule, either in doctrine or practice, or in both, it concerns more than the church in which he holds his membership. Most ministers are ordained and set apart to the work by a presbytery called together from churches of the connection. The reason of this is that they maybe competent to preach or administer ordinances in any church of the same faith and order when they may be called on so to do. Their commission, if called of God to preach, is in all the world, and to every creature; hence, all are very deeply interested in his character and standing, and as the church to which he belongs, as well as the presbytery by whom he was ordained, including the churches to whom the members of the presbytery belong, are to some extent responsible for his character, and as his public standing makes his disorders more prominent than those of private members, a departure on his part from the truth in doctrine, or any unbecoming course of conduct is attended with bitter results not only to himself, personally, but to the church, the churches, and all who desire to be fed, comforted, and edified by his ministry; and a greater reproach falls upon the cause of truth and righteousness of which he professes to be the advocate. Hence, the very solemn charge, not only to the minister, but also to the church, as to the character they shall bear - men full of the Holy Ghost, not given to much wine, no strikers, of good report of them which are without, good disciplinarians, of unexceptionable morals, as ensamples to the flock,

keeping their body - or the passions and carnal propensities of the body - under control, patient, meek, affectionate, and God-fearing.

Men possessing all these excellent qualities, to a good degree, may nevertheless fail to give full satisfaction to all the members of a church, and they may suffer persecution from the world, but they will bear it patiently for their Master's sake. But in the absence of these characteristics they cannot be of much service to the church of God. If they assume a haughty bearing, and a careless indifference to the complaints of brethren, and fortify themselves by their popularity with a majority in the church, become obstinate and willful, heady and high-minded, they may retain an influence for great evil, but of no benefit to the church, or to the cause.

Parties will naturally arise, divisions will appear, gospel travel will be interrupted and disorder will spread throughout the church, and like a devastating conflagration will extend from church to church until the visibility of the church will be involved in a darksome cloud if not totally obliterated.

A *brother* or a minister of Christ should not be made an offender for a word, nor for a mere difference of judgment on unimportant subjects. Ministers, as well as others, are in the flesh and have infirmities which need the forbearance and sympathy of the saints, but their ministry should be faithfully and prayerfully watched by the saints. One shall speak and the rest judge. The saints shall judge angels. But this watchfulness must not be with a censorious and fault-finding spirit, but with singleness of he art for the glory of God. And if the minister advances anything in opposition to the word, or to the law and the testimony, approach him tenderly, lovingly, and in the spirit of meekness, and call his attention to the subject. If he willfully persists in error, and the

aggrieved brother is satisfied that it is error, let the matter be brought before the church, but only in an orderly way. If the church sustain the pastor, let the aggrieved brother or brethren carefully reconsider the matter, but if fully convinced that it be error, and of an important nature and tendency so that they cannot comfortably submit to the decision, it is customary to request the church to invite sister churches to send faithful and judicious brethren to advise with them on the subject. And it is presumed that if the church feels a consciousness that she is right, she will not hesitate to submit the matter to the judgment of brethren who are unprejudiced, to advise them on the subject. But if they refuse to do so, especially where the matter has assumed such dimensions as not only threaten a division of the church, but to infest sister churches, then an appeal should be made by the aggrieved party to orderly churches of the connection. And if they entertain the complaint, which they will be likely to do in the case supposed, they will correspond with the church, which is said to have departed from gospel order, and if satisfaction be not obtained, the delinquent church will be dropped, with her heretical minister, from the connection of all orderly and sound churches; and the aggrieved members driven out from their former home may be received on profession of faith by those who are of the same faith and order with them.

We confine our remarks to such cases as are described in the supposition in the queries presented. But we would faithfully warn all brethren to beware how they indulge in a factious, or fault-finding spirit. Such a spirit will be detected by all who are spiritual.

The independence of all the churches being equal, the action of one church in sustaining a disorderly minister has no power to impose him upon other churches who being equally independent have as good right to reject him. And on the

other hand, the act of one church in expelling members because they cannot fellowship a disorderly minister who is sustained by the church cannot impose the obligation of other churches equally independent, also to reject them from communion and fellowship. But the two churches acting so oppositely can no longer be of the same faith and order, whether in or out of the association. An association, being but a meeting of churches, gives them no more nor any less authority than though they were unassociated. Hence, associations can in no sense be regarded as courts of appeal, their legitimate sphere being only to encourage christian correspondence, love, and union where fellowship already exists.

We have answered the queries of our friend honestly, giving our own views on the subject. Other brethren may differ with us, as we have no right to speak for others, and we claim no infallibility, but are as liable to err as others.

The queries came to us from a portion of the country where there are several highly esteemed churches of the Old School Baptist order, who are not associated at all by any formal organization, and who have heretofore repudiated associations, fearing that they may grow to become instruments of mischief. We have taken the more pains to show that in our view, their being associated or unassociated can make no difference in the case supposed.

May the Lord give us all grace to enable us to walk circumspectly that we may avoid all disorders, live in love and fellowship with all who are of the household of faith, and teach us to "deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God."

Middletown, N.Y.,
December 1, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 91 - 97

ASSOCIATIONS

In reply to brother Ausmus' inquiry, What is an association? we answer, The word signifies a connection formed of persons or things. When applied to Christians, in a religious sense, we understand it to signify a social band of the disciples of Christ in union, harmony, intimately organized on gospel principles, according to the laws of Christ, for mutual edification, in sweet communion and fellowship one with another. An association of churches is almost anything that the associated parties may make of them. If composed of none but regular and orderly churches, of the same faith and order, and conducted on gospel principles, they are, as brother Ausmus has found some of them, both pleasant and profitable. With Old School Baptists, the design of associations is an extension of acquaintance by Christian correspondence and personal interviews, the promotion of fellowship and the general edification of all who belong to the household of God, and as they are generally held, by mutual agreement of the associated churches, once a year, opportunity is afforded for brotherly intercourse, whereby each may learn of the state and condition of the others, so as to be able to sympathize together, to rejoice with those who do rejoice, and weep with such as weep. At those annual meetings letters from the associated churches are brought by their messengers, setting forth the general prosperity or adverse condition of each church, with such expressions of love, sympathy and fellowship as the churches are pleased to communicate. This is deemed important, not only that each may know of the other's affairs, but also to regulate the intercommunion of the churches. Churches in receiving members from other churches by letter, should know whether such churches are of the same faith and order, as also in dismissing from one to another. As it takes all the members of Christ to make up his one body, so all the branches of the

church are required to make up the general assembly of the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. The same immortal life antimates all the members of the one body; the same food nourishes, the same hope cheers, the same faith triumphs, in and through them all. For however distant in locality the branches may be spread out from each other, they are the same one Vine; their vigor is from the same root, and their fruit is the same. None of them bear the grapes of Sodom nor the clusters of Gomorrah, but this Vine of which the Father is the husbandman bears the fruits which are unto holiness, and the end is everlasting life. For "there is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." One church, or branch of the church of Christ, can have no separate interest or independent existence from all the other branches, and all are equally interested in all the affairs of all the fellow-branches.

Much has been said about the independence of churches, of their right to transact their business in their own way, without remonstrance or interference from others. But how is this? Has any portion of the church a right to do wrong, to violate any law or precept of the law of Christ, which is equally binding alike on all the branches of the church of God? If they have, then may they be independent of each other, but such independence at once destroys all fellowship with each other. Our fellowship is based upon identity of faith and practice. In the primitive days they who gladly received the word of the apostles were admitted to baptism and church membership, and they continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship; none were continued in the apostles' fellowship who did not abide in their doctrine. It is no less essential now that Christians and churches should conform to that standard of apostolic rectitude in faith and practice, to secure the common fellowship of the people of God, than at

that time, for all orderly Christians are commanded to mark and avoid those who walk disorderly. This includes those who embrace any other doctrine than that which Paul and the other apostles preached, or are governed by any other laws or ordinances than given in the New Testament. We fully agree with our brother that the church of Christ is the highest ecclesiastical court on earth; and further, we will say she is the only divinely authorized ecclesiastical court on earth. No other court, principality or power on earth has any right to interfere with the discipline of God's house. We would rather have a millstone hanged about our neck, and be cast in the midst of the Atlantic, than fall under the reprobation of the church of God; when she, in her legitimate position, governed by the word and Spirit, utters her decisions, they are binding on earth and ratified in heaven. But here is the point: does the church, in all her several branches, always act in accordance with the word and Spirit of Christ? We are far from adopting the popish doctrine of infallibility. Let it be always remembered that the church is only competent to administer the laws of Christ in the house of God when she occupies apostolic ground, and her enactments and decisions can only meet the divine approbation when they are executed in the Spirit of Christ and according to his laws. It is not, therefore, lording it over God's heritage for any disciple of Christ to repudiate any action of a church, or association of churches, when they have manifestly departed, in their decisions, from the word and from the spirit of the gospel of Christ. In the distinct organization of a branch of the church of God it is fully conceded that such a church, or branch of the church, has full authority to execute the laws and discipline in her own bounds, but with the explicit understanding that she can only act authoritatively when acting according to the divine rule, and this rule is the same in all the departments of Zion, wherever located, and throughout all time.

Associations, in the common acceptation of the term among us, not being an organized branch of the church, do not assemble for the purpose of exercising those prerogatives which belong to the churches as such; but still, to prevent disorder and confusion, they must have the right to withhold their sanction from all that is disorderly and in violation of the law of Christ. Hence when a church which has been recognized in her fellowship manifestly departs from our faith or order, she has, as has every individual Christian, the authority of Christ to drop such church from her recognition as an orderly church in fellowship, and from all, either churches or individual brethren, that walk in disorder, to turn away.

Cases like that mentioned by brother Ausmus sometimes have occurred where churches have become divided, and each party claimed to be the church, and have sent each party their letter to the association, and the duty, however unpleasant or delicate, is forced on the association to decide which, if either party, is walking in the spirit and order of the gospel. In nearly all such cases it is presumable that both parties are, at least to some extent, wrong, and the association should be exceeding cautious how they decide. But when the case is perfectly clear that one party has palpably departed from the order of the gospel, and that the other is contending only for the faith and order of the gospel of Christ, the association has the same power that every individual has to express her fellowship for the orderly brethren and to withhold it from the disorderly. Upon no other principle that we can conceive of can fellowship be maintained among the people of God. If a number of persons, many or few, who have organized as a church, put themselves on their dignity as a church, claim a right to do as they please as an independent church, and refuse to give satisfaction to sister churches in regard to their order, can it be expected that sister churches can continue their walk and

fellowship when the erring church is regardless of their approbation? The association of churches, as we have shown, are voluntary assemblages of messengers and brethren from such churches as have professed to be of the same faith and order, and as such, have mutually agreed to associate as long as they can so agree. The undoubted right is reserved to each to retire from the association when they shall see cause for doing so, and the association has the right to drop from her list any church that in her judgment has departed from the faith and order of the gospel. We by no means regard associational compacts as essential to the order of the gospel. Many churches which stand unconnected with other churches in any formal arrangement of association are nevertheless held in bonds of fellowship by the Old School Baptists generally; but these unassociated churches carry out the same order in dropping from their correspondence and fellowship such churches as in their judgment depart from the faith and practice authorized by the divine rule.

Finally, Christians collectively in churches, or associations, or individually, are required to adhere strictly to the laws and ordinances of the Lord's house, and so long as they walk orderly they have a right to the fellowship of all the children of God, but in no capacity have they the right to violate any of the precepts, nor to depart from any of the examples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is but too true, as our brother has intimated, and most of us have painfully felt, the church is annoyed by ambitious and graceless men, who desire to lord it over the conscience of the children of God, but we cannot see that the nuisance would be at all abated by disbanding all the associations. Many such characters infested the primitive churches and annoyed them, as did the Canaanites the people of Israel in former times; but if our associations are properly regarded they will have a tendency rather to detect and expose such

vain and troublesome characters. The Old School Baptists have constantly disclaimed all right or disposition to legislate for or to sit in judgment over the churches. We meet for the worship of God, for Christian correspondence, for social intercourse and sweet communion with those who truly love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are ready and willing to bear his yoke and to learn of him who is meek and lowly.

We have not written our views to prevent other brethren from responding to the inquiries of brother Ausmus, but we do think if ever there was a time when the saints should associate, and correspond, and speak often and lovingly one to another, that time is now upon us. How long we may be permitted to enjoy the privilege, is with the Lord. Many who have formerly enjoyed it are now deprived. May God enable us to use and not abuse the liberty while we may.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 1, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 415 - 419

ASSOCIATIONS.

REMARKS ON AN ARTICLE IN THE "*CROSS AND BAPTIST JOURNAL.*"

WE freely admit that the argument of our correspondent alluded to, in favor of continuing associational meetings, would come very far short of demonstrating that they were of God. This we were aware of when we inserted the letter; but our brother barely expressed his thoughts on the subject - he did not attempt to enter into the full merits of the subject argumentatively. Mr. Cole, editor of the *Cross and Journal,* however, for want of something better, has availed himself of the abstract expression, and hitched it on to his New School machinery, and is endeavoring to make it step off to the tune of "The house that Jack built." Baptist Associations, according to their original design, are very different things from those mentioned by Mr. Cole as occupying equally elevated ground. All meetings for social worship are, strictly speaking, associations. The correspondence also of churches one with another is fully sanctioned in the practice of the primitive church. Nor do the Old School Baptists object to the length of such meetings as are lawful to be held. It is not the protracting of a religious meeting that we consider objectionable; but the appointment of those excitement meetings, whether protracted or otherwise, for the express purpose of getting up revivals, and making converts, and where anything but the social warship of God, and the edification of his people, is carried on.

We believe there is abundant scriptural authority for protracting a meeting as long as the Spirit of the Lord may direct and circumstances require, providing, however, that such meetings be conducted in the order of the gospel - in preaching the gospel, in singing praise to God, and in

exhortation - but when instead of this, Arminian doctrines are substituted for the gospel, man's ability and creature performances are puffed up, anxious benches, submission chairs, together with all manner of Methodist camp-meeting machinery, are introduced, as being calculated to promote the salvation of sinners, and the upbuilding of the church of God, we say of them, "My son, come thou not into their secret, unto their assemblies, mine honor, be thou not united."

We have no doubt, as Mr. Cole says, some have thought at Sabbath School, and among excited children, is the place to teach the gospel; and we further believe that many have thought that the gospel of Christ could be as easily taught to such unregenerate children as the art of reading; but in this we are of quite a different opinion. We believe, as the scriptures teach, that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God; and that none but such as have heard and learned of the Father will or can come to Christ; that to the natural man or mind the things of the Spirit are foolishness, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Again, in applying our correspondent's remarks to the missionary operations of the day, Mr. Cole is again unfortunate; for the Old School Baptists have no objections to ministers of the gospel going everywhere and preaching the gospel of Christ; so far are we from opposing, we are more forward in this work than any New School preacher we have ever been acquainted with. Witness the thousands and thousands of miles traversed by our Old School preachers, amidst the taunts and jeers of the new order, expressly to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. It is true we do not carry our life in our hands when we go; our life is with Christ in God, and from his fullness we receive grace for grace.

Again, we differ from the new order in regard to the formation of Missionary Societies, not only because they are unauthorized in the scriptures, but because they are in direct hostility to the laws of the kingdom of Christ, and especially in the following particulars, viz:

1st. In amalgamating the church and world in a religious society, contrary to the word which commands the disciples of Christ to come out and be separate; and the prophet says, "Wo unto them that go down into Egypt for help," &c.

2nd. They violate that order which forbids that they should preach for filthy lucre's sake.

3rd. Because by the missionary operations and arrangement, the missionary is to look for his direction and his reward from his society, each one for his gain from his quarter; and thus they pervert that order which requires the ministers of Christ to trust exclusively in God.

And last, but not least, because they do not preach the gospel of Christ, but another, which is not another gospel, but a perversion of the gospel.

We may subject ourselves to the charge of a want of charity by the expression of our candid opinion; but we have never heard a gospel sermon from any one connected with the popular institutions of the day, nor do we ever expect to; for we might as well look for grapes from thistles, and figs from thorns, as for the gospel of Christ from men-made, men-directed and money-bribed preachers.

We are free to admit there are many things connected with modern associations, and in some instances among Old School Baptists, for which there is no more bible authority, or in support of which no better reasons can be urged, than can

be made to bear in favor of Sabbath Schools, Missionary Societies, &c. For such unscriptural things we do not contend.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
November 15, 1839.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 545 – 547

ASSOCIATIONS:

REMARKS ON ELDER BLAKESLEE'S LETTER

It is not our desire or intention, either by special or common pleadings, to encourage a controversy on the subject of Associations, as, to our mind, there are many other subjects at this peculiarly trying time of vastly greater importance to the peace, comfort and edification of the people of God, which claim our columns. Especially should we regret to enter the list with a veteran of the cross whom we so highly esteem as our brother Blakeslee. Indeed, had he confined his remarks to the issue, as stated and defined by himself in the closing portion of his article, there would probably have been no room for controversy, but the principal part of his letter is confined to the extravagant proceedings of two New School Baptist associations, which probably all but New School Baptists would blush to be concerned in. Now, in justice to the Old School Baptists, it should be known that no such high-handed proceedings have ever been tolerated among them.

In our reply to brother Ausmus we stated that an association of churches may be anything the associated parties choose to make of them. We admit that brother Blakeslee has given two sad examples of the prostitution of the name, but we cannot perceive that he has even attempted to show that all associations of churches are unscriptural. He says the question at issue is not whether they have been productive of more good than evil, neither is it, we presume, whether there have been instances in which they have been perverted to be the most outrageous instruments of tyranny and oppression. We presumed that the question of brother

Ausmus related only to associations of churches as they are recognized by the Old School Baptists. Two questions seem to us to be involved: first, Do the Scriptures warrant any association of gospel churches for any purpose whatever? Second, If they do, are ours such as the Scriptures sanction? If, by a careful and prayerful searching of the Scriptures, we find that the primitive churches did associate together, then we have clearly authority for them by apostolic example, and however much wicked men may pervert them, the example of the primitive churches cannot be thereby invalidated. The pattern and example of primitive saints associating in churches is admitted by brother Blakeslee, although it is known to him that there are very many religious organizations called churches whose practice is as grossly antichristian as that of the two associations instanced by him.

The primitive christians and churches either did or did not, under the direction of the apostles, associate together. We assume that they did, as individual christians, associate in church relation, and, as churches, so far as to recognize, correspond, and, so far as practicable, unite together for social devotion and for mutual advice and edification, while none were allowed to lord it over God's heritage. Without any kind of association there could be no union, sympathy or identity; but we have palpable evidence that the apostolic churches did maintain a correspondence with each other, and their members met together in such harmony for the worship of God whenever they found opportunity, without regard to what particular branches of the church they belonged. This is evident from the fact that Timothy and Titus, though pastors (or bishops) of particular churches, had a charge to ordain elders and attend to other services in sister churches. All the churches of Galatia were addressed as one community, or association of churches, in one epistle written to them by Paul. Messengers were sometimes sent from one church, or

churches, to another church of the same faith and order. It would be difficult to find an instance where christians or churches of the primitive faith and order ever refused to associate together when favored with opportunity because they were members of different branches of the church of Christ. It is not our impression that the churches of the apostles' day were as formal in their distinct organization as they are now, but where two or three were gathered together in Christ's name, there Christ himself was in their midst; and if, as at Pentecost, the number were increased to thousands, they were still of one heart and one mind. Hence we read of "the church in thy house," as well as the church in a city or nation.

None of the branches of the church of Christ can any more be independent of the other branches than any one member of a natural body can be independent of its fellow members. The hand cannot say to the foot, I have no need of thee, nor the eye to the ear. Christ says, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me." This figure seems to represent the perfect vine as embracing all the branches which have grown out of it, and all alike invigorated and made fruitful by their common relation to the whole vine. A still stronger figure is used by the apostle, 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." The same apostle also in Ephesians iv. dwells largely on the vital and inseparable unity and fellowship of all the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus, wherever they may be: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father

of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all;" and in the twenty-fifth verse he adds, "For we are members one of another." Now can such identity and vital union exist without association, without harmony of action? Can one member be independent, or have no need of all the other members? Can the foot travel on and leave all or any of its fellow-members behind? Can all these members, which make up the perfect and complete body of Christ, being many, keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and yet hold no correspondence or association together? We presume brother Blakeslee will not assume that they can. But still the inquiry returns, Do all these Scriptures justify the association of churches in the manner in which they are held by the Old School Baptists of our day? The affirmative or negative response must depend on how they are held or practiced by the Old School Baptists. It is more than possible that some of our Old School Baptist associations may practice some things which are not justified by the law of Christ. We would all do well to look at this. Brother Blakeslee found in the New School Baptist associations which he has referred to, "legislative, judicial and executive" powers assumed, none of which have we ever found in any of our Old School Baptist associations. Neither the churches, nor even the apostles, were ever invested with legislative power. Christ has made all the laws his kingdom can ever require. The apostles are enthroned in the church to judge the twelve tribes, but not to make any new laws; nor has the church any judicial or executive power beyond that of strict obedience to the laws of Christ as adjudged and defined by the inspired apostles. In obedience to Christ's laws, as expounded by the apostles, the church, and every member thereof, whether individually or associated, are required to withhold their fellowship from the hidden works of darkness, and to withdraw from every brother that walks disorderly. But the rule of order by which the extension or suspension of fellowship is to be regulated is the law of Christ. Those unassociated churches in the north

and northwestern part of this State are only unassociated in form; that is, they reject the name and formalities of associations, because, as we presume, they became so disgusted with the abominations which they have witnessed in the associations in their vicinity that they are jealous of all formal associations; but they are in reality associated in a form of their own, which they consider less objectionable. It is common with them to hold yearly meetings, at which brethren and sisters and Elders come together for social worship and mutual correspondence, and, for aught we could perceive, they really associate freely by meeting and greeting each other in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and they appear to be as fond of associating in their way as those who organize for conducting a more general correspondence with the churches and associations scattered abroad. Our ministering brethren from that vicinity also occasionally visit our associations and associate with us, and we hope enjoy the seasons with us. Now we do not wish to be understood as advocating any of the excesses or abominations which prevail among the New School order, which are complained of by brother Blakeslee, but we wish to discriminate between a christian and an antichristian association. There is something social in the very spirit of christianity which should be cherished by all who can appreciate it. "Let brotherly love continue." "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." These injunctions are not restricted to organized branches of the church of God, but they are addressed to the whole brotherhood, and we believe if ever there was a time when they that fear the Lord should meet frequently and speak often one to another, that time is now. Some have objected to associations because they drop from their connection such churches and associations as they believe have departed from the faith. But do not the unassociated churches do the same? And are not the brethren individually required to do the same? "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." When churches

depart manifestly from the faith and order on which our fellowship is based, we are bound, individually and collectively, to withhold from them our fellowship, or recognition, until they return to the order of the house of God. Indeed, we are greatly mistaken if we have not witnessed great evils growing out of the oft reiterated cry of the independence of churches. How far is a church independent? It is simply this: A church of Christ in gospel order, governed only by the word and spirit of the gospel, has authority to discipline her own members without interference from any other organized body, court or council on earth, and her decisions are entitled to be respected by all other churches. But churches, as well as individuals and associations, are liable to err, both in the spirit and letter, and in such cases she has no right to drag other churches or individuals into any disorder or heresy whatever; and any church who feels a consciousness that she has acted in the fear of the Lord, been governed in her actions by the divine rule, will rather court than shun investigation. She will frankly say, Come and behold our order; for if she is governed by the spirit of the gospel she will desire to secure the confidence and fellowship of all her sister churches. We always regard it as a suspicious circumstance when churches, ministers or other individual members put themselves upon their dignity and bid defiance to their sister churches under the plea of independence. It is virtually saying, We regard not your approbation; we do not appreciate your fellowship or care for your correspondence. Certainly such is not the way pointed out in the divine rule for keeping "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. Hut he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." John iii. 20,21. This rule bears the sacred seal of the eternal King, and may be relied on with implicit confidence.

Again in conclusion, we wish to say that our object in this article is not to disagree with the views of brother Blakeslee, for we as decidedly disapprove of the ungodly course which he condemns as he does, but our design is, while we repudiate and condemn the wrong, to discriminate between the right and the wrong, and we trust that he will understand and appreciate our motive. We cannot resist the conviction, from an experience of fifty-two years, that a general meeting of the Elders, brethren and sisters of churches of the same faith and order once a year, or oftener, if convenient, is both lawful and expedient. The primitive churches and members did meet as frequently as possible for mutual edification, without any restriction on account of distinct organization into separate branches, and every expression of admonition recorded, to our understanding, tended to encourage, if not to absolutely enjoin such gathering, as both duty and privilege. If churches are to isolate themselves from each other, pay no regard to the order nor seek the general welfare of the whole body, what is to become of that sympathy, concert and identity which is to distinguish all the members of Christ as one body, animated by one life, fed at one table, on the same food, having but one and the same interest, and all bound to the same destiny? Why should a single branch of the church wish to isolate herself from her fellow-branches and eat her morsel alone? The very spirit of vital christianity calls for association. "Come and hear, all ye that fear God," whether belonging locally to this or that branch. All who fear the Lord and obey the voice of his servant, are members of one Christ, governed by one Head, constituting but one body, and members one of another in union so close, and sympathy so vital, that if one member suffers all the body feels the pain. We do not argue that for such association any distinct organization or written constitution is indispensable, only so far as may be useful to preserve harmony and good order. The yearly meetings in some sections, and conferences, or corresponding meetings,

in other sections of the country, may secure all that is desirable, but those who are partial to the one form should be slow to censure their brethren who see cause to promote the same object substantially in another form, unless such form shall be manifestly subversive of the order of the gospel. Not only the organized associations, but all other forms of meetings are liable to abuses and it becomes the saints to watch diligently, and see that all things be done decently and in order. Let us prove all things and hold fast that which is good.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 1, 1863

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times
Volume 150, No. 11 - November 1982

ASSOCIATIONS.

Are They of Heaven or of Men?

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: – Brother F. M. Turner, of Tuscaloosa, wishes me to ask you to give through the SIGNS the best views you have upon associations. The main point upon which he wants information is, Is there any spiritual authority for the present system of organized associations, as practiced by the Old School or Primitive Baptists? Did they originate with the ancient apostolic churches, or with and among Catholics? We want to know exactly what kind of an association is scriptural, or of divine authority. By writing on the above subject at your earliest convenience, you will greatly oblige at least two anxious inquirers.

Yours in fellowship,
H. J. REDD.

REPLY. – In answer to the inquirers of brethren Redd and Turner, we will refer them to what we have published as our views on the subject on various occasions, which may be found in the first volume of our republished Editorials, pages 125 and 545, and also in the SIGNS, volume xxxi., No. 21, volume xxxi., No. 23, and volume xlv., No. 18. We still entertain substantially the same views on the subject of associations that we expressed in those articles. In those articles we have given it as our conviction that,

First. There is no scripture authority for any ecclesiastical body except the church of God.

Second. That the church of Christ is a unit. “There is ONE body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and

Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." – Eph. iv. 4-6. Therefore all the members are exhorted to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Of this one church, which is the body of Christ, he is the Head, the King, and the only Law-maker for his people, as he has never invested any of his children, not even his enthroned apostles, with the least particle of legislative authority. Therefore,

Thirdly. For associations or other religious organizations having a distinct constitution, creed, laws of by-laws from those which are given by Christ to his church, we have never been able to find any divine authority. If there is any in the scriptures, we have failed to find it.

Fourth. Although we find no authority for associations, as distinct from or auxiliary to the church of God, the church is nevertheless an associate body; and although as branches of the one living vine, or organized body, her branches may be widely scattered in their localities, like those addressed by Peter, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, yet they are the same "Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," undivided and indivisible, having no powers, interests or elements in distinction from each other.

Fifth. No branch of the church has any power to delegate to any of her members to form auxiliary societies, courts or bodies independent of or distinct from the whole body, the church. As God has set the members in the one body, the church, as it hath pleased him, they are as the branches of the same one vine, all deriving their vitality and vigor from the same one root; they are not only members of the body, but they are also members one of another. None of them are or can be independent of all the rest of the members or branches. They are, as organized by God himself, closely and

inseparable associated, so that no one of them can say to another member or branch, I have no need of thee. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and these members, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.” For christians, as individual members of Christ, or as churches of the same faith and order, to associate for the worship of God and for mutual edification, is not only tolerated by the law of Christ, but is positively enjoined. They are forbidden to “forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is.” – Heb. x.25.

Sixth. To meet together for spiritual communion, to inquire after the general prosperity of Zion, to pray for her peace, to cherish and strengthen the bonds of unity, love and fellowship, to provoke unto love and good works, to “lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees,” is to associate in the way and manner which we find fully sanctioned by the laws of Christ, and by the example and usage of the apostles and primitive disciples of our Lord. Against such association there is no law. At such assemblies or associations, all who in the providence of God are permitted to attend from any church of the dame faith and order are cordially welcomed to participate in all the deliberations and proceedings of the assembled saints.

Seventh. Brethren Redd and Turner ask whether there is scriptural authority for the present system of *organized* associations, as now practiced by Old School or Primitive Baptists. Our brethren may not be aware that our northern associations differ from those in the south in the manner of organization. The Warwick Association, and several others in our correspondence, had this subject under consideration more than forty years ago, soon after the separation took place between the Missionary (so-called) and Apostolic Baptists; and after due deliberation the same questions substantially, which are now agitating our brethren at the

south, were referred to the churches of which the associations were composed, and by the decision of our churches the constitutional form of association was abolished. In the judgment of our churches, a constitution, with articles of confederation and faith distinct from those of the church or churches, involved the idea of a distinct body, for which we can find no scriptural authority. Since that time our annual meetings have been regularly held for correspondence and christian intercourse. They are not composed of *delegates*, as we do not hold that the church has any power that she can scripturally delegate; but each branch of the church uniting in these annual meetings sends messengers to bear their epistles of love and fellowship, and to inquire after the welfare of their sister churches. When thus assembled, that all things may be done decently and in order, either the pastor of the church with which we have met, or some other member, is appointed to preside over the deliberations for the time being, and the clerk of the church, or some other brother in his stead, is requested to record the proceedings of the meeting, that they may be accurately reported to the several branches of the church, whose messengers we are, and by whose authority we assemble. These minutes, together with a Circular Letter to the churches, and a Corresponding Letter to other clusters of churches of the same faith and order, are prepared and sent for the promotion of a general correspondence throughout the accessible bounds of the household of faith. Messengers also are generally appointed to bear our correspondence to such other associations as are in correspondence with us; but these are clothed with no delegated power: they are only messengers to bear letters of fraternal greeting, and to facilitate scriptural intercourse and fellowship. Such are our associational meetings here at the north, and we have been greatly blessed with the sensible presence of our Lord, if we are not altogether mistaken, while sitting together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Eighth. Our brethren inquire, “Did they [the associations] originate with the ancient apostolic churches, or with and among Catholics?” We have no account of any meetings of the churches known among the apostles and primitive churches by the name of associations; but that the church of primitive days did sometimes meet and correspond by messengers, we have, as we think, examples, at Jerusalem, at Antioch, and some other cases, but in no case under any other constitution than that of the church of Christ. Nor do we know of any meetings of the kind or bearing the name among the Catholics. We have some historical account of churches of the Baptist order being associated and holing associations in Wales and other parts of Europe before our fathers emigrated to this country; but of the precise manner in which they were organized or conducted we are not prepared to speak. We commend the earnest disposition of our dear brethren Redd and Turner and others to investigate the subject. It is of minor importance to us to know when, where or by whom associations were first introduced, or in what ages or countries they have been observed; the more important thing to be know is, are they warranted by the laws of Christ, as laid down for our rule in the New Testament?

That the primitive saints did meet and associate as often as they had the opportunity to do so, is very evident; but by reason of bitter persecution they were scattered abroad, and their seasons of association together were often interrupted by the violence of their enemies, by reason of which they were scattered into distant localities. But when opportunity served them, they joyfully embraced it; not by regular, stated, periodical gatherings, but as frequently as they had opportunity, sometimes daily. Then, whenever they came together, all who were of the same faith and order were equally recognized, whether they had been baptized and received as members at Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia or Rome.

In responding to the inquiries and attempting to comply with the requests of our brethren, we have endeavored to direct their inquiring minds to the scriptures, as the only safe and infallible guide, and to the Holy Spirit to open the scriptures to their understanding. If anything further should be desired of us on this subject, we refer the brethren to what we have published in the SIGNS, as referred to in the former part of this article. And our desire and prayer is that we all may be led by the spirit of truth, and that we may walk worthy of the high vocation of our heavenly calling.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 3.
February 1, 1881

A SWEET SAVOR OF CHRIST.

BROTHER BEEBE: - Please give your views on 2 Cor. ii. 15; and be particular on the last clause, in showing how we are a sweet savor of Christ in them that perish; of death unto death, &c., or otherwise set brother Trott at it. Respectfully yours,

REED BURRITT.

REPLY: As yet we have had no opportunity to present the above request to brother Trott. Such views, therefore, as we have are at the service of brother Burritt; and brother Trott can also give his if he thinks it expedient.

Whether the apostle intended to include with himself the entire ministry of the gospel, or to confine the application of the pronoun *we* to himself and Titus, we are not in so many words informed. We are inclined to the opinion that what was in this case applicable to Paul and Titus, must also be applicable to all the apostles and other ministers of the gospel who, like these faithful servants of Christ, are called, qualified and sent forth by the Lord of the harvest. The term *Sweet Savor*is figuratively used in this case, and the figure is evidently taken from the incense offerings made unto God under the old dispensation by the sons of Aaron. The priesthood of Aaron, as well as that of Melchisedec, was typical of the priesthood of Christ. That which in the offering of Aaron constituted a sweet savor, did not so much depend on its grateful perfumes to the carnal smell or taste as it did on its being what God had directed, and what was pleasing to him.

The gospel ministry, or the ministry of reconciliation, may be considered as possessing a peculiarly sweet fragrance from the censer of our adorable High Priest. When he ascended up

on high, &c., he received gifts for men, and of these he gave some apostles, pastors and teachers; through these gifts the ministry of reconciliation is published, and Christ is set forth as a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people; and the subject now under consideration is one that pertaineth to God; for we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ; hence we discover the connection between the gifts and ministry of the gospel and the priesthood of our Lord. The cloud of incense from the censers, under the former dispensation, very strikingly portrays the manifestation of "the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." See verse 14. For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are a savor of life unto life. These are not a sweet savor unto men, but unto God; for that which is pleasing to men is abomination to the Lord, and that in which the Lord delights affords no sweet savor to carnal men. But in reference to the effect of the gospel ministry on them that are saved and in them that perish, to the one we are the savor of death unto death.

On this last expression our brother has admonished us to be particular. Well then, we understand that, in perfect harmony with the design and will of God, the gospel ministry is to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; they being themselves dead, the gospel has no life in it to them; it is all a hidden mystery to them, a dead letter, a stumbling-stone and rock of offense to them that stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. The savor of his knowledge by us draws the line between the living and the dead, between the precious and the vile, and bears ample testimony that as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. The gospel of Christ, differing widely from A. Fuller's gospel, J. Wesley's gospel, and from every false system, has no life to offer to the dead. The gospel of Christ, In its effects, is the very opposite in those

that perish to what it is to them that are saved. To those that perish light is darkness, bitter is sweet, and sweet is bitter; to them the gospel is foolishness, yea, and all the things of the Spirit are foolishness, neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

And in this, as the apostle says in the preceding verse, God causeth us always to triumph in Christ, &c.; and in this view of the subject, the testimony or labors of gospel ministers are always successful. “As many as are ordained unto eternal life believe,” and the balance are blinded; and all this is a sweet savor of Christ, for it answers precisely the purpose of God; hence the labors of God’s servants are not like those who beat the air, or like the uncertain races where all run, and but one obtains the prize.

It is *death unto death* in them that perish; not that we are to understand that the gospel in itself, or that the preaching of it, is the cause of the death in which those that perish are involved, or that its publication is to increase their condemnation, or augment their damnation; this would be unnecessary, as they are condemned already, and that justly, too, by the law; besides, it would be incompatible with the nature of the gospel. Christ came not to condemn the world; yet the light of the glorious gospel is the spirit of his mouth by which anti-christ shall be consumed. In all the warfare of the man of sin against the saints, the latter shall overcome them through the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony. Here, as we understand, lies the true secret why the world cannot love the truth, nor those who preach it; it is to them like the words of Micaiah the prophet to Ahab. Ahab says, “I hate him; for he prophesieth no good for me, but evil.” The testimony connected with the gospel ministry is that all men are guilty, condemned, lost, helpless, and under the curse of the law; and that there is no name given under heaven or among men whereby they can be saved, but the

name of Jesus. Such preaching being destitute of life, joy, comfort or peace, unto those unto whom God has not spoken peace, to those who are dead, is death unto that death in which they are involved. But the same ministry which is death to the dead is life to those who are quickened. The words of Jesus are spirit and they are life; he has the words of eternal life, and to such as have experienced the work of grace, passed from death unto life, the gospel revives that principle of life which is implanted in them. Christ ix their life, and Christ is formed in them the hope of glory; hence the preaching of Christ is to them life unto life.

We have briefly given our views on the passage proposed; the subject will admit of much more being said, but we will only, in justification of our views, refer the inquiring christian to an experimental illustration of the subject. Every soul that can now rejoice in the glorious gospel of Christ has once been dead in trespasses and sins. In that state, what was the ministry of the gospel to them? Did it afford them peace and joy in the Holy Ghost? Did the word preached do them good, not being mixed with faith in them that heard? Certainly not. But the more clearly it was preached, the more hopeless d±d it present their own personal standing and condition; and while they could hear the saints declaring what joy, peace and comfort the gospel inspired their hearts with, for themselves they could see nothing in it but that which gave them a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. And why was it thus? Because there was no vital principle in them corresponding with that life which is in the gospel; and consequently they were destitute of the capacity to know or understand anything of those emotions which fill the redeemed and quickened saints with heavenly rapture; all was then a dead letter to them; but when it pleased God to reveal himself to them as their Savior, and to cause his life-giving presence to dawn upon them, then they could, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that

they might grow thereby. Again, how often do we witness the assembling together of a mixed multitude at the place where the gospel of Christ is preached; and when thus assembled, the servant of God is enabled to proclaim the truth in faithfulness, the effect is quite perceptible; while quickened souls are fed and comforted, the Arminian, the Deist, and the unbelieving portion of the congregation show evident marks of uneasiness; and not unfrequently have scores of Hager's children shown their disapprobation and contempt by leaving the house. Why this difference? Because the same that is life unto life to them that are saved, is death unto death to them that perish; as the same sun that melts the wax will harden the clay.

We submit these remarks to the consideration of our correspondent, and to our readers at large, hoping the Lord may-lead us into all truth, for the Redeemer's sake.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
November 15, 1839.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 548 – 552

THE ATONEMENT.

PERHAPS among all the rich displays of the adorable God-head which shine forth with refulgent brightness in the works of creation, providence and grace, none can be found to outshine in splendor, or outweigh in importance, that which develops the purpose and grace of God in causing his sword to awake against the Man that is his Fellow, and which sets forth the atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people. No human talent can express, nor human wisdom comprehend, the fulness of this delightful doctrine; in the contemplation of which, the rich association of considerations. flowing into the mind of the saints, are such as to absorb the mind in wonder and admiration. In our feeble efforts to declare what we have been taught by the word and Spirit of God on this subject, we know not where to begin, how to pursue, or where to leave off. The atonement has God for its author, Jesus Christ for its victim, or sacrifice, the salvation of the elect of God for its object, eternal truth for its security, and almighty power for its execution. In the atonement all the attributes of Deity are displayed glowing with. inexpressible beauty and grandeur.

In the eleventh number of this volume, we gave a summary view of the doctrine of the total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man, in which we traced his history from his. primeval rectitude and innocency, through his unhappy fall, and by an application of divine truth showed that he, in his fallen state, is “dead in trespasses and sins,” justly condemned by the righteous and inflexible law of God, and under its tremendous curse; without an eye to pity, or an arm to administer relief. There we left him, promising that in the present article we would treat upon the only possible way of salvation, brought to light through the atonement of our

Lord Jesus Christ, which we promised to prove by the scriptures to be special and particular.

Notwithstanding the frequent occurrence of the word atonement in the Old Testament, we find it used but once in the New Testament, viz: Romans v., where it is brought forward by the apostle as the ground of the justification of the church of God, and of reconciliation to God. “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” In the light of this scripture we clearly discover that the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ was definite. Definite first, in reference to the purpose of God. The specific objects ascribed to God by the apostle are the commendation of his love toward those who are with himself included in the pronoun *us,* and in connection with this divine exhibition, their justification by his blood, and ultimate salvation through him. Second, the characters for whom the atonement was made are definitely pointed out, viz: they are those who do eventually rejoice in God, through Christ Jesus, and by him receive the atonement.

Third, the vicarious nature of the atonement is definitely expressed in the connection, “Who was delivered for our offenses, (agreeing with the prophet Daniel, that Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself,) and raised again for our justification.” For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commended his love, &c, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Here we discover that the people for whom Christ was made an offering were sinners, without strength, &c., and as sinners they were condemned and under sentence of death by the law. “The soul that sinneth it shall die.” The irrevocable decree has passed! Heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should fail until it should be completely fulfilled. But while this was our deplorable situation, “in due time Christ died for us.” But how for us? Most certainly in our room. For if he had not borne the curse for us, we certainly must have borne it, and sunk down forever under its weight. We cannot conceive how this substitution can destroy the relation which Christ as a spiritual Head bears to his church, but rather, in Gin’ view of the subject, it opens the way to make a fair display of that unity and oneness which has ever existed between them in a spiritual sense. “And he is the head of the body, the church, &c.,. and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.” “And you, that were some time alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.” - Col. i. 18-21.

When in the contemplation of the atonement and redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ, the “man in Christ” is caught up to the third heaven, and is there made acquainted with those divine mysteries which cannot be expressed by human tongues; and amidst the glorious scenery of that bright world, his eye is fixed on one who was as “A Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,” he is led to inquire,. “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth the wine-fat?” “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to

his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." - Isaiah liii.

The design of the atonement was that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself "a peculiar people, zealous of good works." — Titus ii. 14.

The extent of the atonement is *to all the elect.* "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth - who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," &c. - Rom. viii. 33, 34. "I am the good Shepherd. The good shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep." - John x. 11. To all the seed of our Lord. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." - Isaiah liii. 10-12.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself," &c. - Eph. v. 24-27.

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins should live unto righteousness." - 1 Peter ii. 24. "This is my blood in the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." - Matt. xxvi. 28. "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." - Gal. ii. 20. By the above, together with many other portions of the word of God, it is evident that

God had a specific object in view in the pouring out or the soul of his Son unto death, which special object was the redemption and ultimate salvation of his elect.

The efficacy of the atonement. “By one offering lie has forever perfected them that are sanctified.” Heb. x. 14. - “Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall (not may) return, and come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.” - Isaiah li. 11; xxxv. 10. “And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their head; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.” And the voice of the Father is heard in Zion proclaiming, “As for thee, also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water.” - Zech. ix. 11. “For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” - Rom. v. 10. “By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquity.” - Isa. liii. 11. “By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” - Heb. ix. 12. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.” - Col. 1. 14. “Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” - Acts xx. 28. “Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” - Rev. v. 9.

We have not room here to meet and rebut the arguments generally adduced in favor of a general or universal atonement; we shall however resume the subject at our earliest leisure. We intend in our next number to present our views on the doctrine embraced in the sixth item of our prospectus,. viz: the sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases

effectual work of the Holy Ghost, in quickening the elect of God.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
August 28, 1833.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 87 - 91

THE ATONEMENT

Our correspondent "F." has laid out work enough to keep the editor and correspondents of this periodical busy for some time to come; and no doubt exists in our mind that the several points submitted may be discussed with greater satisfaction and far more profit to our readers generally, than the further discussion of those questions of Associational Order which have occupied so large a portion of our sheet for some months past. There are many subjects of importance involved in the inquiries of our correspondent, and, after we have filled out this article in reply, we shall probably leave room enough for abler pens.

We can conceive of no more direct connection between the atonement made by our adorable Redeemer, and the temporal mercies enjoyed by the human family, than there is between the atonement and the final perdition of the ungodly. There is, as we conceive, a connection existing, by which all the administrations of our God's providence, retribution and grace are placed in harmonious order, the one with all the others; so that, if it were possible that any part of the divine purpose or arrangement of God could fail, such failure would effect, confuse and derange the whole system of the divine government. Temporal mercies were enjoyed before sin corrupted the human family; nor have they been withheld since sin entered the world. Up to the present hour God in providence continues to send his rain upon the just and unjust; but instead of regarding the providential mercies of God as evidence of a reconciliation by the blood of Christ, embracing the recipients of those common or temporal favors, Paul speaks of them (Rom. ix. 22) as illustrative rather of the manner in which it is the pleasure of God to show his *wrath*, and make his power known; as in the case of Pharaoh, God exalted him for that very cause.

The atonement made by our divine Redeemer, either was exclusively for those who shall finally reign with him in glory, or one of two things must be inevitable: first, all mankind will be saved by it; or, second, none will be saved by it.

If, according to the advocates of a general atonement and offered salvation, or, according to the mongrel vender of terms and conditions, in the vicinity of our correspondent, Christ died for his elect in no sense in which he did not die for all mankind; or, in other words, if he died for all mankind in every sense in which He died for his people, if all mankind are not finally and everlastingly saved from wrath and condemnation, then the blood of Christ does not cleanse from all sin, nor does his atonement reconcile the objects of it to God; in which case Christ has died in vain. Do not those who hold such heresy trample under foot the Son of God, and count the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing. If his blood lacks efficiency to secure the object for which it was shed, it is defective; and if defective, it must be an unholy thing. To this conclusion we cannot come without doing despite to the spirit of grace. But if it be admitted that his blood is a holy thing, and that it cleanses the sinner from all sin, it must follow unavoidably that all for whom it was shed, are by it cleansed, redeemed, saved and reconciled to God.

Many arguments of the most conclusive nature are at hand, to show that there was no partial atonement made by Christ. Of all that work of which he is the Author, he is also the Finisher; he is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

The word *atonement*, or *at-one-ment*, signifies *reconciliation*; we are therefore reconciled to God by the atonement made, or there was no atonement made for us. Christ "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our

justification," (Rom. iv. 25) or we are not of the number for whom he died. If he died for our sins, he arose for our justification; and if he has died and arisen for us without putting away our sins and effecting our complete justification, then He has died in vain, having failed to secure the objects for which He suffered.

If his object in suffering was to procure temporal mercies for us, that object is not attained, as we enjoy them to no greater extent since, than before he suffered; and we see those who fear not God, and who regard not man, in possession of a much greater abundance of temporal favors than the saints; insomuch that their eyes stand out with fatness, and they have more than heart can wish. If the object of his death, according to Wesley, was only to bring man into a salvable state, unless he has absolutely saved them, he has failed in this, because there is salvation in no other.-Acts iv. 12. And as there is salvation in no other than Christ, salvation can proceed from no other.

We have not been able to find the passage where "it is expressly stated that Christ is the Savior of all men," in any sense. We think "F." has allusion to 1 Timothy iv. 10: "For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of those that believe." We cannot understand this universal salvation to proceed from Christ in his official or mediatorial distinction from the Father; but the apostle very justly ascribes the salvation by which all temporal mercies are extended to the whole human family, to that "Living God," in whom all the apostles and prophets trusted. That common salvation which secures us from famine and death, to the full extent that it is enjoyed, is attributable only to the "Living God," in whom, as his creatures, we live and move and have our being; and from whom also the *special* salvation of all that believe proceeds. For he so loved the world that he gave

his only begotten Son, (for what? that all might have opportunity to secure the salvation of their souls? By no means; but this was it) "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" - John iii. 16. Of believers, he is the Savior, in a sense differing from that in which he is the Savior of *all men.* Now, who are thus denominated? "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." - Acts xiii. 48. "Because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." - 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14. From these scriptures, with a multitude of other passages, the conclusion is unavoidable, that God gave his Son to die for the sins, and arose from the dead for the justification of as many as were ordained to eternal life, and for no more. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." - Rom. viii. 29, 30. Now, if the learned gentleman in Massachusetts can show that all these provisions are made alike for all mankind, he will do service to the doctrine of universal salvation.

That all new covenant blessings, (salvation from first to last included,) flow to the heirs of promise through Christ as a *federal Head*, is so clearly demonstrated in the scriptures of truth, that he who can remain skeptical upon the subject is strongly tinctured with infidelity, let his professions of piety or his pulpit eloquence be what they may.

The inspired apostle affirms that God has given him [Christ] to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and **THE FULLNESS OF HIM THAT FILLETH ALL IN ALL**. - Eph. i. 22, 23. Adam was a figure of Christ (Rom. v.

14,) and *the human family was the fullness of Adam.* The second or anti-typical Adam was the Lord from heaven; but the first Adam was not spiritual, but natural, consequently the federal head only of his natural posterity which was created in him; but *afterward*, in the order of time, was the revelation of that second Adam or federal Head, which was spiritual; and as the natural federal head embodied and represented only a natural progeny, so his spiritual anti-type as a federal head represented that spiritual seed which was created in him, and which constitutes his body and fullness.

Not in his Godhead, but in his mediatorial headship of the church, Christ is the beginning of the creation of God, and the first born of every creature or created thing. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." - Ps. xxii. 30. As his seed, his people existed in him before they were generated by him. They are a *chosen generation* because they were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world." - Eph. i. 4. "His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me," saith the Lord. Ps. lxxxix. 36. The seed of David and the seed of Israel are figuratively used to illustrate the relationship of God's people to Christ, their spiritual Head and Progenitor. "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." - Isa. xlv. 25. "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant, justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." - lsa. liii. 10, 11. From these scriptures it is evident that by virtue of real vital relationship Christ has borne the grief's, carried the sorrows, and suffered the chastisement of his people's peace; so that by his stripes they are healed.-Isa. liii., 4, 5. How preposterous is the theory of the miscalled *Baptist* minister in the vicinity of our correspondent! "He does not view the atonement as

canceling any sin, but as necessary to show God's regard for holiness; not because men could not have been saved equally well without it, if God had so willed." Without what? Atonement, or reconciliation, or justification! In the estimation of the minister alluded to, it would have been *equally well* to save sinners in their sins without reconciling them to God, &c., if God had so willed. Glory to God in the highest! He did not so will. His will was to save people from their sins, and to constitute them a holy nation, and a peculiar people. How could the acceptance of Christ's sufferings in lieu of the sinner's punishment display God's regard for holiness, if Christ was not legally viewed as federal head of those for whom he died? Nothing can be more repugnant to all the perfections of God, than the which the Yankee preacher represents as God's chosen method of showing his regard for holiness. "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they are abomination to the Lord." - Prov. xvii. 15. Can it supposed that God has chosen abomination to show or illustrate his regard for holiness? Away with such madness blasphemy! Deny the previously existing union, relationship and identity of Christ and his church, and you deny the only principle on which divine justice could admit of the offerings of Christ for the transgressions of his people. Well might the ministers of our civil law admit of the punishment of the innocent for the crimes of the guilty, to see that ours is a justice loving government.

Again; if Christ's death did not cancel the demands of the law, for the sins of those for whom he died, how they are justified by his blood? (Rom. iv. 9.) Seeing, in that case, their sins remain in full force against them. But, notwithstanding all the cavilings of men, men must be purged from all sin and guilt by the blood of Christ, or they can never see God. The legal and righteous demand of the law was, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." What the soul is to the natural body of

man, Christ is to his church. When Christ died, the soul, life and immortality of the church, which is his body, was delivered up for the offenses of that body, and accepted by law and justice for the offenses of that body, and raised from the dead for the justification of that body, and by his stripes that body was healed; for he put away the sins of that body by the sacrifice of himself. "Much more then being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life." - Rom. v. 9, 10.

We will now attend to 1 John ii .2, and see if it conflicts with the doctrine of the foregoing scriptures. "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the whole world." The term *propitiation*, according to Walker, signifies *atonement*. Butterworth renders it *peace* or *reconciliation*, which definitions seem to agree with the Greek Lexicon. But the difficulty in understanding this text, is to decide in what sense the term whole world is to be taken. In this text the *whole world* is reconciled to God through the atonement of Christ; and in the text, same epistle, (V. 19,) we are informed that the *whole world* lieth in wickedness, or unreconciliation to God. The apostle was evidently writing to the scattered saints of Jewish descent, according to the flesh, and would have his brethren know that the advocacy of Christ, and the reconciliation by him effected, had the same application to his people among the Gentiles as to those among the Jews.

(Concluded.)

NEW VERNON, K. V., May 1, 1846.

IT was common thus to speak when both Jews and Gentiles were intended, although all Jews and Gentiles were not

intended, as for instance: These went out a decree from Caesar that *all the world* should be taxed.-Luke ii. 1. All the world in this case did not include the inhabitants of Sodom, Gomorrah, and those of the antediluvian world, but it was used in a sense common at that day, and embraced all the Provinces which were tributary to Rome. "If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation." - John xi. 48.

The sense of the text is simply this: Little children, we have an Advocate with the Father, even Christ, who is our peace, or the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for those of all his people throughout the world. There is no other Savior, Advocate with the Father, or propitiator for sin, but Christ, and he is our Advocate. He is our peace, our Redeemer, and our life; in him we are reconciled to God, and delivered from wrath. This view is in harmony with the words of Isaiah, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." But why should all the ends of the earth look for salvation to him? The reason is given: "For I am God, and there is none else." It requires no less than God to save a poor guilty sinner, and there is no other God therefore salvation is to be looked for only from him. A just God and a Savior, there is none beside me," saith God, neither is there any propitiation or atonement for sin, that which is in Christ, and that is for his people throughout the entire world, from Adam to the- burning day, and east to west, from north to south. The view we have of this text we conceive to be in perfect harmony with the doctrine of federal union of the church to Christ, atonement and eternal redemption. But give to this the interpretation urged by arminians, and suppose the apostle to affirm that Christ is the reconciliation of every son or daughter of Adam, that he has redeemed them all from hell, washed them all in his blood, freely justified them from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, that he was delivered up for their offenses and

raised for their justification, and that by his stripes they are healed, how shall this construction of the text be made to harmonize with those scriptures which inform us that before Christ came and suffered some of the human family were suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, and that others cannot escape the damnation of hell? The proof then, that Jews and Gentiles are alluded to in the text, lies in the fact that these terms whole world cannot mean anything else, and be in harmony with the general tenor of the scriptures.

What we have written, imperfect as it may be, must suffice for the present on the first part of our correspondent's letter, and we will close by offering a few remarks on her allusion to a foreign communication on the subject of *free agency*. We have no means of testing the precise amount of power, mental, physical, or moral, that man had before the fall, so as to compare it with his present power, and strike the balance. "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions." - Eccl. vii. 29. We believe that man generally acts voluntarily in sinning against God; but we read of "cursed children, that cannot cease from sin." - 2 Peter ii. 14; but still we believe they act voluntarily in the development of their sinful propensities. As to their ability to keep the law, they have neither disposition nor power, for the law requires perfect and perpetual obedience to the will of God, and unremitting obedience to all its requirements. In short, it requires that they should be as perfect as Adam was in his first estate; and if they could keep it they would be justified, but not prepared for spiritual enjoyments by it; but, by its deeds, no flesh can be justified.

The redemption of the church by the blood of Christ redeemed her from the dominion as well as from the curse of the law, else they could not be legally married to Christ. The righteousness of the law which required that those to whom

it was given should "Love the Lord thy God," &c., is fulfilled in them by their vital union with Christ. The saints are as dead to the law as though they were never under its dominion; it has no power to command them; they are now under a new and better covenant. The old could only command and demand everything, but could furnish nothing; the new covenant demands nothing, but furnishes everything. The *old* was written and engraven on tables of stone, but the *new* is written on their inward parts, and engraved on their hearts. So if Christ has set us free, we are free indeed; if under grace, we are not under the law.

Arminian workmongers, who, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, see in the absence of Sinai's thunder, any cannot incentive to holiness; but the in whose hearts God has recorded the law of the spirit of life, cease not to pray that they may be found in Christ, not having their own righteousness, which is of the law. Their desire is that they may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be made comformable to his death. As to our being released from loving our neighbor, or from anything enjoined in the law, we say, "We do not make void the law, but we establish it." For love is the fulfilling of the law, and the love of Christ constrains us. His love is shed abroad in us, and that will invariably centre in that which is lovely in the divine estimation. But if the love of Christ be not in us, in vain shall we strive to fulfill the requisitions of the law, in love to God, or love to man.

That which is known to legalists only as duty and obligation, becomes the sweet privilege of the renewed soul, by the abounding of that grace which

> "Changes the slave into a child, and duty into choice."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.
April 13, 1846.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 633 - 642

THE ATONEMENT.

DEAR ELDER BEEBE: – Does preaching that the atonement was made, or that it was through or in consequence of it that we have temporal blessings, amount to heresy? If so, is it a heresy of sufficient magnitude to declare non-fellowship for it? A reply to the above through the SIGNS at your earliest convenience will greatly oblige one who desires to act according to the truth.

Yours in much love,
R. W. HARRELL.
Belton, Texas, Feb. 7, 1881.

REPLY. – The word *atonement* in our language is defined by Webster to signify reconciliation, satisfaction, and specifically in theology, the expiation made by the obedience and personal sufferings of Christ. In all the atonements made by the Levitical priesthood, the shedding of the blood of the sacrifices demanded by the law was for the ceremonial remission of the sins of those exclusively for whom they were offered. All the sacrifices under the ceremonial law were but shadows of the great atonement which was to be made by the great High Priest of our profession, when he through the eternal Spirit should offer himself without spot unto God, and by which he with his own blood should obtain eternal redemption for all for whom that offering should be made, and by which he should perfect forever them that are sanctified. The offering of Christ was not to procure temporal mercies, but for the remission of the sins of his people, and that he might redeem them for whom the atonement was made unto God by his own blood, and cleanse them from all sin, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Temporal mercies in the providence of God come alike upon the just and also upon the unjust; but so far are they from showing that the ungodly are partakers of the peace-speaking blood of atonement, the apostle shows that they are indicative of the wrath of God. “What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?” – Rom. ix. 22.

It is held by some that incidentally the ungodly are benefited by the atonement of Christ, because it is said that for the elect's sake all things now exist. But this we regard as a far-fetched and exceedingly speculative inference. It is true the word must continue until all the redeemed of the Lord shall be gathered into the fold of Christ, but it must also stand until all the ungodly shall have filled up the cup of their iniquity.

Heresy, in a scriptural sense, may apply to any doctrine or sentiment held in opposition to bible truth, or subversive of the truth as it is in Jesus, and as set forth in the holy scriptures. Happy and highly favored of the Lord must that christian be who is perfectly free from misconceptions as to the true meaning of every part of the scriptures of truth, if indeed such an one can be found on the earth. It is subversive of the teaching of the Spirit for us to denounce as a heretic, or make a brother an offender for a word, as we at present are in an imperfect state. We see but in part, we know but in part, and are not to tolerate in ourselves a censorious or criticising spirit towards our brethren. The magnitude of heresy is ascertained by its virulence and hostility to the truth, and by its tendency to overturn the faith of the disciples. Some were to be reproved, some rebuked sharply, and others to be delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

We may declare non-fellowship for an error, while we still believe that the brother who holds it is a beloved child of God. In the case stated by our friend Harrell, the church were the evil of which he speaks exists is most competent to judge whether the preaching of which he speaks is subversive of the faith to the extent that disorder, confusion and contention are so engendered by it that the peace of the church requires a withdrawal of fellowship from the offender.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 14.
July 15, 1881.

Ulster County, N. Y., April 28, 1858.

Dear Sir: - There are some who say that the atonement is general and that redemption is particular, and others who say that both the atonement and the redemption are general. If you will give your views, through the SIGNS, on this subject, you will very much oblige, and I hope instruct me. What I want to know is, can the two be separated? If the one is general is not the other? I hope you will give your views at some length, and oblige,
A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.

The simple word *atonement,* or at-one-ment, signifies reconciliation, agreement, or restoration to favor, and when applied in a gospel sense, has reference to the mediatorial sacrifice of the Son of God, by which his people are reconciled unto God. That mediatorial work or sacrifice involved his suffering for them the penalty of the law which they had transgressed, bearing the curse which was due to their transgressions, putting away their sins by sacrifice of himself; being delivered up for their offenses, and raised again from the dead for their justification.

Redemption signifies the buying back of that which has become legally involved and is held by another in captivity. For instance, a flock of sheep which has gone astray from the premises of their owner, and committed trespass on another, may be legally held by him who has sustained the injury, until the owner of the sheep shall come forward, prove property, pay the legal charges, and take them away. This is called redemption, or buying back the flock or property which belonged to him who redeems, before the trespass was committed. In this the payment of the damages is the atonement or reconciliation, for it satisfies the party who held the legal claim upon the flock, and the price paid for the satisfaction, or reconciliation, redeems or buys them back.

So that the atonement and the redemption of the sheep are one and the same thing; they cannot be separated. None but the owner of the sheep has the right to redeem them. If he fails to redeem them, and they are sold to some other person for the damages they have done, they are not redeemed at all, because they are not bought back, or restored to the former owner, but pass into the possession of a new owner. The redemption of the people of God is thus described, Isa. liii. 6, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all."

That is, the whole demand of the law and justice of God, was demanded of that Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and who says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." - John x. 11, 12. If Christ had not been the owner of the flock before they strayed, or went into captivity, justice could not have demanded satisfaction at his hands, the Lord would not have laid their iniquity upon him, nor commanded, saying, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." - Zech. xiii. 7. Nor could Christ have claimed the right to redeem them on any other ground. He was the Shepherd whose own the sheep were, and he plead and sustained his prior claim to, and right of property in them, saying, "Thine they were, and thou gayest them me." "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." And this glory he says he had with the Father before the world was. (John xviii. 5, 7, 10.) Therefore he could in coming into the world to redeem them, confidently refer to the records of eternity: "Lo! I come, in the volume of thy book [the book in which all his members are written, Psa. cxxxix. 16,] it is written of me; to do thy

will, O God." - Heb. x. 7. "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he had given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." - John vi. 39. These Scriptures define very clearly the extent of redemption by Jesus Christ, and the principle of relationship and proprietorship on which that redemption is based. In this redemption he asked not or prayed not, for the world, but for them which his Father had given him out of the world. And this was the full extent of the will of the Father, according to which God worketh all things, that Jesus should redeem and save his people from their sins, and raise up again at the last day all that the Father gave him before the world was, and therefore it was that the Lord laid on him the iniquity of *us* all. That is all of *us* who like sheep have gone astray. And he has accordingly "surely borne *our* griefs, and carried our sorrows." "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement our peace [or atonement] was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." - Isa. liii. 4, 5. And because "It pleased the Lord to bruise" and to "put him to grief." "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge [shall he] justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." - Isa. liii. 10, 11. And we know precisely what will satisfy him; for he has graciously told us. "I pray not for the world, but I pray for them which thou has given me" out of the world. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." - John xvii. 9, 24. This is his will, and the Father has pledged his veracity that he shall be satisfied. Nor is this any less the will of the Father than it is the will of the Son, for, "This is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

Thus we are instructed in regard to the nature and extent of the atonement and redemption which is in Christ Jesus. That it extends to all that the Father gave him, and to no others. That it embraces all that seed which Jesus should see when his soul was made an offering for sin, and which seed shall serve him, and be accounted to him for a generation, according to Psalm xxii. 30. But it extends to no other seed or people but that chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, and peculiar people which shall show forth his praises. (1 Peter ii. 9.)

The atonement or reconciliation is just as extensive as the redemption, and the eternal salvation from sin, death and hell, is just as extensive in its application and its saving benefits as the atonement and redemption, and it can extend no further. All the murmuring, fault-finding and blasphemies of the children of men cannot extend it any further, nor remove one of Zion's stakes, nor break one of her cords.

After all the opposition manifested by the world to the definite extent of the atonement, there is not an individual on earth that really desires to be embraced in it but those who are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power. All others prefer to rely on their own fancied free will, free agency and use of means, and to rely upon a chance system, which would give a chance to everybody, but in reality save nobody. God's redeemed people themselves were all of them opposed to his method of salvation until they were brought to an experimental knowledge of their guilty, lost and helpless condition, then they found it to be exactly suited to their case. And then being taught of God, they could not be satisfied with any uncertain, indefinite or chance system. Knowing their own total helplessness, they bless and adore God for that covenant which is well ordered and sure, for it is all their hope, and all their salvation.

Such a system of redemption as the Arminians contend for, if they could have it, would do them no good, for it would save nobody, and they are therefore just as well off in their present delusion on the subject, as they would be with a *chance* redemption, offered grace, and conditional salvation, while they are totally depraved, and dead in trespasses and sins. They are at war with God's plan of salvation, and it is impossible for them to be saved in any other. There we must leave them to perish forever in their delusion, unless they, by a divine power, over which they nor we have any control, shall be brought to know their need of a whole Savior, a sure redemption, and to rejoice in a perfect atonement and reconciliation to God, and to his way of saving poor, lost and helpless sinners.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 102 - 106

THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH.

(Hebrews xii. 2.)

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

These words of admonition, instruction and encouragement are addressed to “holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” compassed about with a great cloud of witnesses, called to run a race which is set before them, yet burdened at times with weights which impeded their progress, and sins which easily beset them, and sometimes bewilder them, insomuch that their eyes are diverted from steadfastly beholding and pressing toward the mark of their high calling. None can look unto Jesus as the author and finisher of their faith whose faith is not from him, in him and by him as its author, center and finisher. None whose faith is from any other source can justly claim Jesus as its author; nor can any whose faith requires to be perfected by any other than Jesus have a right to say that Jesus is the finisher of it. The preceding chapter (Hebrews xi.) defines the vital principle of the faith of which Jesus is the author and the finisher, and demonstrates its matchless power by a cloud of witnesses, extending from righteous Abel down to the time when this epistle was written. The Holy Ghost testifies that this “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” And we are also informed in the sacred volume that it is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God. – Gal. v. 22; Phil. i. 29.

In the absence of this faith no man can be looking unto Jesus, for no light of nature, of reason or science can reveal him. Only the faith which is the evidence of things which are not seen can look unto Jesus. And unto those who by faith can behold him who is invisible, Jesus has said, "Blessed art thou; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." – Matthew xxi. 17. Who else can reveal him, since Jesus himself has said, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him?" – Matt. xi. 27. Only the living, who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand, can look unto Jesus and see in him the author and finishers of their faith. To know him is eternal life; and they who truly know him, know also experimentally the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, and are conformed unto his death.

As in the figure of running a race, he who runs should have his sight directed to the objective mark, so Jesus, who has finished his course of suffering in the flesh and entered within the vail, is the mark which is set before his followers, who are to be constantly and steadfastly looking to and considering him who endured great contradiction of sinners against himself, lest they should be weary and faint in their mind.

To be looking unto Jesus is to be looking away from themselves, and away from everything else as objects of attraction. The world, the flesh and Satan are to be opposed, denied and resisted, and every weight which is calculated to burden and impede progress in the divine or spiritual life is to be laid aside, with every besetting sin; and being thus stripped for the race, they are exhorted to run with patience the race which is set before them. In looking unto Jesus the

enlightened follower of the Lamb sees in him a perfect pattern of patient endurance. Although the blessed Jesus encountered all the opposing powers of wicked men and devils, those never did or could for a moment divert him from the course in which he was engaged, nor could any amount of ignominy or shame slacken his onward progress. If briars and thorns were put in array before him, he went through them, "traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save." When led or driven by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil, he was tempted in all points as his followers are, and yet without being to any extent overcome by the tempter. Among the temptations when he then and there encountered was that in which all the glories and treasures of this world, with tall their alluring and fascinating charms, were in one moment of time, in all their concentrated power, brought to bear upon him, to turn him aside from the race which was set before him. In the infirmities of our nature, which he had taken on him, he experienced the feelings of our infirmities in the endurance of temptation, for he was tempted in all points as we are. On the one hand was arrayed all the glitter of wealth, fame and allurements of the world, while on the other stood the racking cross, the shame, the malignant spite, malice and scorn, with bitter reproaches and envenomed persecution of all the powers of darkness. The painful agony wrung from his tortured heart the sweat which like great drops of blood fell to the ground, and in that inexpressible ecstasy of anguish the piercing cry breaks from his sacred lips, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt." – Mark xiv. 36. Thus, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared, though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made

perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him. – Heb. v. 7-9.

Looking unto Jesus, who endured all this, we behold a most wonderful example of patient endurance in suffering and perseverance in him, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame. All this the suffering Lamb of God endured for the joy that was set before him, not for any comfort the world could supply; for no affliction for the present is joyous, but sanctified sufferings afterward yield peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. The joy which was set forth in prophecy: "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." – Isa. liii. 10, 11. "Thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day," when he should be raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. When the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, we "may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." – Eph. i. 18-23.

Thus we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, now crowned with glory and honor. The once humiliated, patient, suffering Lamb of God is

exalted and set down with the Father on his throne of transcendent glory; having risen from the dead and ascended up on high, and having led captivity captive, he has a name and glory which transcends every name that is named in heaven or in earth, in full possession of all power in heaven and in earth. To him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear.

"Behold he mounts his throne of state,
And fills the Mediatorial seat,
While millions bowing at his feet
With loud hosannahs tell –

Though he endur'd exquisite pains,
He led the monster, Death, in chains;
While seraphs in their loudest strains
With music fill bright Eden's plains –
He's conquer'd death and hell."

To this once suffering but now triumphant Savior the eye of faith in all the saints is directed to look, and in him they see the Captain of their salvation, who has led the way through great tribulation up to the joys at God's right hand. The joy that was once set before him is now set before his followers; and as thus it behooved him to suffer, so now it behooves his followers to suffer for his sake. And the same joy that was before him is now before us, if we are his people; and as he endured the cross and despised the shame, the bright example is presented to our faith, for unto us it is given on his behalf, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake; for if we suffer with him, we shall also be glorified together. And as he has overcome and sat down with the Father, so shall we overcome and sit down with him in his glory, when all tears shall be wiped away, and sighing and sorrowing shall be known no more forever. No one had led the untrodden pathway before him; but he has led the way

for us, having made the passage through death up to the immortal realms of his supreme glory. He is the first begotten from the dead, and the first born among many brethren, and the way is open. He has entered as our High Priest within the vail for us; and although the intervening vail now hides from us the ineffable splendor of his glory, so that it doth not yet appear what we shall be in the consummation of the glory which is held in reserve for all who love his appearing, yet the golden bells of his priestly robe are heard, giving the cheerful assurance that he ever liveth by the power of an endless life, and because he lives, we shall live with him, if we now are of them who love his appearing.

Followers of our God and Savior, as dear children, it becomes us to lay aside every weight; we cannot bear the crushing weight of the tables of the Sinai law which Moses brought down; how can we run a race with such a load? Why attempt to run with a yoke upon our neck which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? The law is not destroyed, but it is fulfilled, and its righteousness is fulfilled in all who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. We are no more to serve in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the spirit. Nor can we run well if we indulge in making provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lustings. Self and selfishness is too much of a load for us to carry if we run in this race; let self be denied, avarice curbed, fame and worldly honors be resigned, and laying aside all malice, and all guile, and all hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as new born babes desire the sincere milk of the world, that we may grow thereby. These weights are serious hindrances, and from them we need to be relived, in order that we may so run that we may obtain the prize, and not be as they who beat the air. Christians find themselves annoyed by so many besetting sins, that they are sometimes perplexed to know what is their most besetting sin. It seems to us that the Hebrew disciples were more easily beset by the sin of legalism than any other. It seemed

hard for them to see how they were to be saved without being circumcised and keeping the law of Moses. Some of the Gentile churches became bewitched with that heresy, and it seemed hard to wean them from it. But this race which they were called to run was not set behind, but before them, therefore they were to look unto Jesus, not to Moses; for “No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” To run this race the runner should suffer no attraction to allure or draw his eyes away from Jesus. As the eye of the faithful servant is unto his master, and the eye of the maid is unto her mistress, so should all the followers of Jesus be looking unto him, and to him alone, as their pattern and forerunner; looking to him for grace to keep them in the way, and finally to give them the victory over sin, death and hell, and to receive them into the full fruition of their reserved inheritance at the right hand of the awful majesty of his throne above.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 14.
August 1, 1881.

AWFUL WARNING TO PRESUMPTUOUS FANATICS.

THE following instance of fool-hardened presumption, rebuked as with a bolt from heaven, should serve as an awful warning to those religious fanatics, who, in the infatuation of their blinded zeal, defy the wrath of God by daring to present their lives, works, and property, as a price for the salvation of souls, and thus insulting that "one offering" of the immaculate Lamb of God, by which he "hath perfected forever all them that are sanctified." These blinded zealots generally profess to believe that the atonement made by Christ was universal, and designed for the salvation of all mankind. They must consider their offerings as more effectual, and, more intrinsically valuable, than the blood of Christ, or they could not presume that their life, labor, or wealth, could possibly effect what the blood of Jesus had failed to do. Therefore, they do most evidently "trample on the Son of God, and count the blood wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and do despite unto the spirit of grace." Is it, therefore, surprising that this wicked and presumptuous man was made an example of by him who will not give his glory to another, or his praise to graven images?

What can be more insulting to the Divine Majesty, than for poor, finite, guilty worms of the dust, to attempt the improvement of his counsels and decrees, to add to the election of grace, or to the provisions of grace and mercy something of their own invention or providence? Yet this is the grand ultimatum of all the New School schemes of the age.

"MYSTERIOUS PROVIDENCE. – During a recent revival in the Greenport Baptist Church, N.Y., a beloved deacon of the church, named Randall, having engaged in prayer, told the

Lord that if his death could be the means of the conversion of sinners, he was willing to go. In about three minutes after he closed he was suddenly attacked with paralysis of his right side, and all sensation left him. He was carried home, and died after an illness of three days." – *Baptist Record.*

New Vernon, N.Y.,
May 1, 1844.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 430 - 431

A WORD TO THE “DRY BAPTISTS”

In our recent travels we were introduced to many persons as "Dry Baptists;" and as we have found them to be quite numerous, it has occurred to us that some notice should be taken of this hitherto neglected portion of our friends. But first, it may be proper for us to give a brief description of them. They are not called Baptists to signify that they baptize, as did John the Baptist, nor that they have themselves been baptized, as were John's disciples, or the primitive disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are not therefore entitled to the name of Baptists in any scriptural sense of the word; for practically they are not Baptists at all. Nevertheless by a sort of common consent, the term as qualified by the adjective dry has been used to denote a peculiar description of persons who evince a strong attachment to the people of God, attend strictly on the public ministry of the word, seem to receive the testimony of truth with avidity, are always ready to defend the cause of truth so far as words or arguments are concerned, can tell what is regarded by saints as a Christian experience, and can be satisfied with nothing short of the children's bread, and yet manage so as to keep out of the water. In their walk and conversation and in all respects except the ordinance of baptism and those privileges to which gospel baptism is a prerequisite, they are agreed in sentiment, sympathy, and feelings with the Baptists. They are somewhat deficient in confidence in regard to their vital interest in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God. They firmly believe that it is the privilege and duty of all who love our Lord Jesus Christ to be "buried with him by baptism," and really feel that it would be a delightful privilege to them if they could only see their way clear; but alas! When they would do good, evil is present

with them, and how to perform that which is good they find not, but they find a law in their members warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity; and from all that we can learn from them, we are led to conclude that if they could be perfectly satisfied that this law of their members was slain, and that they should never be plagued any more with it, and that they were truly subjects of grace, and that they could do honor to a Christian profession, they would gladly obey the command of Zion's King, and be baptized and unite with his church.

Having thus briefly described the characters to whom the appellation at the head of this article is given, and informed our readers that there are many of them scattered over all our country, we will say something of the advantages and disadvantages of their rebellious course. They are not subjected to so much persecution and reproach for righteousness' sake as they would be if they were obedient to the commands of Jesus Christ. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution; and of course, as they are living in disobedience, it is reasonable to conclude that they will escape at least some of the persecutions which the saints are subjected to. The faithful admonitions of the saints to church members when they walk disorderly are rather mortifying to the flesh, but all such mortification the Dry Baptists escape as they are not under the watch care of the church; and even the world will look very differently on their foibles if they make no public profession of religion. They will also be very likely to escape the charge of hypocrisy and of having a name to live when they are dead. These are some of the advantages, if they may be so called, which the Dry Baptists enjoy; but against these there may be some offset in the disadvantages of this rebellious course.

In contemplating the disadvantages, we shall find that *the way of the transgressor is hard,* for rebellion is as the sin of

witchcraft and idolatry. He that knoweth his master's will and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; and we conclude that God's children who have experienced the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, who have felt the bitterness of sin, the fiery indignation and wrath of the law, and the efficiency of the Savior's blood applied for the remission of sin - those who have felt the joys of salvation and the love of God shed abroad in their souls do know from painful experience something about the stripes and chastisements which the faithful God inflicts on his children when they forsake his law and walk not in his commandments. They feel an uncomfortable consciousness that all is not right; something whispers to them that their course betrays a want of gratitude to God their Savior, and when they mingle with the children of God, they manifest a shyness as though they were intruding, yet their hearts seem to go out after the society of God's people. The language of their hearts is "Entreat me not to go back;" but the language of their practice is "Urge me not to go forward," and so between a will to do and a want of confidence or energy to obey the commands of Christ, they tarry long in their disobedience. As their rebellion is in Scripture compared to the sin of witchcraft, it often brings them on to a sort of "*enchanted ground,*" where they "spend their money for that which is not bread, and labor for that which satisfieth not," instead of hearkening diligently unto the authority of Christ, eating that which is good, and enjoying the sure mercies of David. (See Isaiah 55:2&3.) What they are vainly laboring for they can never attain unto, for they seem determined to walk by sight, whereas God has ordained that his followers shall walk by faith. If they could see their way clear, that is, if their natural judgment could be convinced that there were no impediments in the way, that they would never meet with anything to cause them to regret it, they would at once ease their consciences by taking Christ's yoke on them.

What we have written above is about the Dry Baptists; our intention was to address a few words to them. And as we feel duty bound to preach to sinners, we know of no class of sinners to whom we can address ourselves with more propriety than those described above. But how shall we address them? Shall we call them brethren? We hope they are born of God, but Jesus has said, "Except a man deny himself and take up his cross and follow him, he cannot be his disciple:" and "If ye love me keep my commandments." We doubt the propriety of calling them brethren so long as they disown Sarah as their mother. We do not find it in our heart to call them reprobates, for we believe they are bought with a price and will ultimately reign with Christ in immortal glory. Well, for want of a more appropriate name we will call them by the name by which they are frequently designated.

Ye Dry Baptists, are you satisfied with the leeks and onions of Egypt? Are you willing to live and die in disobedience to him who has loved you and given himself for you? Have you ever reflected that Jesus your King has placed the ordinance of baptism as the very first command that is binding on heaven born souls? This command, being the very first enjoined, must be obeyed before you can obey any other. It is in baptism that the children of God take on them his yoke, and until they are yoked they are not qualified to serve him. Nothing that you can do religiously before you are baptized can be in order, for in the order of his government, that ordinance stands first. So long, therefore, as you neglect it after having passed from death unto life you are living in a state of open rebellion. May we not say to you as Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without (Genesis 24:31)." If you have passed from death unto life, you belong to the household of God, and the church has a claim on you; whatever gift or talent for usefulness you may possess is the property of the church. Why then, will you persist in your

wicked course, and rob the church of what belongs to her, and your own soul of the privileges which are prepared for you in the Zion of our God? And above all, why will you transgress the law which your covenant God has written in your hearts, and rank yourselves with the enemies of the cross of Christ? "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city; for without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (Revelation 22:14,15)." Will you - can you - dare you say that those who are without are your companions, your associates, and your chosen company? Your practice says all this, let your practice then no longer belie the language of your hearts.

New Vernon, N. Y.
October 15, 1847

Elder Gilbert Beebe

BAAL'S PROPHETS MOCKED.

"OUR CAUSE PROSPEROUS: - The accounts of revivals, as our readers have seen, are many and pleasing. Our exchange papers also contain many such accounts. The truth is, this has been a year of the right hand of the Lord, with many of our churches. Great things have been done for us, whereof we ought to be glad. Our gratitude should bear some sort of proportion to the blessings we have received.

And what ought our anti-brethren to think of facts before their eyes? Can they not see that the Lord is with us, and that he approves our course? Or will they parry the influence of these things, by saying that it is all fanaticism, all mere sympathy? Surely they will not thus delude themselves; but come out and bless the Lord, fall into the ranks of their effort brethren, and help forward the glorious cause.

There is another thing, however, we must not forget - Our responsibilities increase constantly. The number of those who are depending upon us for the bread of life is constantly enlarging; and the difficulty of meeting, this demand, of course becomes greater and greater. To many minds, it is a matter of sincere doubt, whether upon our present plan of of operations we can possibly meet public expectation in relation to us. And in this view of the subject, the question is, What is to be done? How are we to get laborers, and how are we to dispose of those we have, to the best possible advantage? We hope this subject will elicit that earnest inquiry which its great importance demands. We shall probably bring it up again; and in the meantime it is desired that those of our brethren who may have any suggestions to make, touching this matter, will say on." - *Jun. Ed. Christian Index.*

REMARKS.

"AND it came to pass at noon that Elijah mocked them; and said, Cry aloud, for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." - 1 Kings xviii. 27.

At the hazzard of being thought presumptuous, and of being charged with making light of solemn things, we will venture so far to copy the example of the prophet, in the case of the worshipers of Baal, as to show some particulars wherein the irony expressed in the above passage may be justly applied to the New School worshipers at this day; and illustrate the proximity of the doctrines and practices of modern, to that of ancient Baalism, by the article copied from the *Index.*

The first paragraph of the article just copied, tells us the time of day, (not by the dial of Ahaz, but by the minute hand* of this Georgia pointer) to wit, that it is with the New School about noon. The light of the fire which they have kindled, and of the sparks with which they have compassed themselves about, (Isa. 1. 2) is now shedding upon them its meridian sun. It is therefore the proper time to mock them, agreeably to the pattern of the prophet.

In his second paragraph, he inquires what his *anti-brethren* ought to think of facts before their eyes. Neither our bible nor dictionaries will inform us what precise meaning to attach to the compound, "anti-brethren." We suppose, however, that it is an Ashdod term, belonging to the vocabulary of the New School Baptists, coined expressly for the purpose of stigmatizing the Regular Old School Baptists, by claiming some kindred with them; and these are *anti,* we presume, because they will not consent to any terms which imply relationship with such a mass of corruption, either by affinity or consanguinity. We can inform this junior editor

what we think of the facts before our eyes; we consider them a very evident fulfillment of what the scriptures have predicted concerning the development of the man of sin, the son of perdition, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. Such indeed is the deceivableness of the workings of anti-christ, that the New School, together with all who perish, regard as the very things which demonstrate them to be anti-christian, as proving that they are well pleasing to God. The argument used in the article, and in general use among the craft, that the Lord is well pleased with their new-fangled systems, because their converts are many, is by no means peculiar to modern anti-christ; the same argument has been used thousands of years ago, by the prophets of Baal; by Pagans, Papists, Mahometans, and various orders of Protestants, to whom all that can be gained by the argument belongs, both on the ground of priority, and from the fact that the disparity between them and their sister sects of anti-christ is greater, in most cases, than that between them and the kingdom of Christ. Let the weight of this argument be tested by the balance of the sanctuary of God, the scriptures, and mark the result. The kingdom is given to the little flock, according to the Father’s good pleasure; but the broad road and wide gate are devoted to the many. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom? But who are those who flourish in the New School ranks; are they the poor, the afflicted; those who are considered the filth and offscouring of all things; the “excrescence” which Mr. Peck speaks of by no means. On their records are emblazoned the names of titled dignitaries of this world; and by such supported, they boast of rising into great respectability in the world. Bound, as they are, under chains of darkness, and reserved unto the day of Judgment to be punished, we cannot wonder that they should take darkness for light, and flatter themselves with the notion that the Lord is as well

pleased with their new schemes and tricks, as they themselves are. Surely, he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and hold them in derision.

"Can they not see that the Lord is with us, and that be approves *our* course?" For one, we can see no good reason why the Lord should abandon his own course, or what defect in his own course should induce him to lay it aside, and to adopt the anti-scriptural movements of these poor, deluded fanatics. Mr. Stokes very justly suspects that these most potent arguments in support of New Schoolism will be attributed to fanaticism; but why do you indulge such fear, Mr. Stokes? Is it because we are advised of your method of making converts to your faith, of your camp meeting, anxious-bench, and straw-pen-machinery, your seducing spirits, and your doctrines of devils, your damnable heresies, and your bitterness against the truth, that you are so apprehensive of the incredulity of your anti-brethren, in the divinity of your system? Mr. S., however, predicts that his anti-brethren will fall into the New School ranks and help forward the cause! Any cause which will admit of being helped forward by men, must be the cause of men; not the cause of God; yet such as have no higher views of God, and of his purpose and work of grace, than to suppose that it may be advanced or retarded by men or devils, may wait a long, long time, ere they will realize any great accession to their ranks, from the genuine Old School, or Bible Baptists.

In conclusion, Mr. Stokes would not have his readers forget that their responsibilities increase constantly. But for what, or whom, are they responsible? What new responsibility can be accumulating on men, in regard to the work of God, would be quite difficult for any but arminian workmongers to conceive of; but, "The number of those who are depending on us for the bread of life, is constantly increasing!" This statement we are not prepared to deny; but we would inquire, Who are

they, and how does their folly increase our responsibility; and to whom are we responsible on their account; to them, to ourselves, or to God? Moses was not able to give the bread of life to the children of Israel. He that eateth of earthly bread shall hunger again. Our Lord Jesus Christ says, "I am that bread of life;" - John vi. 48; and in verse 51, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread which I will give, is my flesh." Those, then, who are looking unto men for a supply of the bread of life, are poor, deluded creatures, under the curse of that law which says, "Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm." If Mr. Stokes and his followers are responsible for their increase, it must be on the ground of having contributed to their delusions, by teaching them to "spend their money for that which is not bread, and their labor for that which satisfieth not;" Isa. lv. 2; and in this respect, we doubt not, Mr. Stokes, and all that may sustain his heretical paper, together with all such as contend for the new order of divinity, are truly responsible. It may well be a matter of doubt, whether those who are expecting the bread of life from the hands of any being in heaven or on earth, but from Christ alone, will realize their expectations; to us, however, it is not a. doubtful case; we do know, that unless we can eat his flesh and drink his blood we have no life in us. "In this view of the subject, the question is, What is to be done? How are we to get laborers, and how dispose of those we have, to the best advantage? Were we to "answer a fool according to his folly," we might say, Your present "plan of operations" is a good one. Surely, it is a god; it can impart life to dead sinners, only you need to cry a little louder; for your idol may be talking, or in a journey, or asleep, or, we are under the impression, we have heard it rumored, that he had become bankrupt, and that his treasury must be replenished. As to the question, how you are to get laborers, why, that is as plain as any thing can be; get them where you got those you now have on hand; collect

all such pious young men as are panting for the work, as you can find; mind and collect such as are too lazy to get their living honestly by labor; or to cut the work short, you collect the funds, and you will not have occasion to wait long for laborers - reverend laborers. Upon the rational principles of *cause and effect,* as the churning of milk bringeth forth butter; as the wringing of the nose bringeth forth blood; as protracted and camp meetings will bring forth New School proselytes; and as arminian doctrine will bring forth excitement and effort; so also will the glitter of gold and silver bribe almost any number of those pious souls to quit jogging after the plough, and the toilsome labor of the work-shop, and enter upon the self-denying labor of love, of receiving a respectable education free of expense; which, having acquired, they will give away their precious labors at the rate of from five hundred to three thousand dollars per annum. Let the craftsmen come together, and cry aloud; let them agonize, cut themselves with lancets, and leap upon their altar; let them hunt for mission funds, as for bidden treasure; and so shall their colleges, and pulpits, and Sabbath Schools, be amply supplied with the choicest lot of young dandies that ever disgraced the name of Baptists. Do these New School editors ask us what they shall do with what laborers (alias missionary preachers and agents) they have? We would advise them to return them all to their moulds, and to their bats; and if they want gospel laborers, and have an interest at the throne of grace, let them ask the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his vineyard; not direct him as to what sort, how many, or in what way he must call and qualify them; leave all this to his wisdom and goodness; and for their own part, when the Lord sends forth his servants to contend for the truth, we would suggest that they should cease to. oppose and persecute them. This scriptural arrangement will be infinitely better for the people of God, than to assume the responsibility of a work which belongs exclusively to him who ascended on high, and who received

gifts for men; and upon this ground we shall not find ourselves burdened with increasing responsibilities; we shall only hold ourselves responsible for the faithful discharge of such obligations as our divine Lord has imposed on all his disciples, in all time, since the introduction of his gospel on earth.

* Jun. Ed. Stokes

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
November 1,1839.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 535 – 545

BANNERS.

WE live at an eventful epoch in the history of what is called Christendom. All orders, religious and profane, are on the alert; some fearfully important event is at our threshold - "the time is at hand." The grand procession of the Sunday School pupils, with their clerical commissioned and non-commissioned officers, of all orders of the various professedly religious denominations, were paraded through the streets of Philadelphia about ten days ago, amounting to an immense number, each company with its adopted banner, in truly martial order and military appearance, to be assembled, we believe, in front of the old state house, and addressed by several of the black-coated gentry. Every class of our countrymen, when organized and wishing to appear formidable and determined, whether military, mechanical, political or religious, have recently adopted the same policy, and in their respective public ostentatious parades, open to the breeze their floating standards of witty devices, and thus avow their enthusiastic determination to prosecute their enterprises, whether good or bad; but that which strikes our mind with fearful apprehensions for the safety of our civil and religious liberties, is the remarkable coincidence of operation displayed by the world and the reputed church. While we could show by numerous public proclamations that the world is becoming abominably religious, we can with equal clearness prove that the professed church are with as rapid pace becoming worldly. Both the civil and ecclesiastical powers are verging to the same central point, and, to all human appearance, will be soon merged in the same anti. christian interests.

To the sons of Sion, we would add, God has also given us a banner, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Psa. lx. 4. And although the sons of wickedness may set up their

ensigns for signs, and marshal all their troops in terrible array against the truth, yet will we rejoice in the salvation of our God, and in his name we will set up our banners. Psa. xx. 5. Not a standard of human device, but that banner which God has given to us.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
June 1, 1841.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
pages 690 – 691

BAPTISM

Cromwell, Indiana

Brother Beebe: - The *Signs of the Times* still continues to come as a welcome messenger to us, and we wish to have them continue to come as long as we can raise the money to pay for them. In your last you requested each subscriber to try to procure at least one additional subscriber, and I have done so. You will find the money enclosed, etc.

Brother Beebe, I am going to trouble you for your opinion. I will name the circumstances: We had two Baptist preachers here last spring, and there are five or six Baptist members here - but they are not organized in a church - and there were one or two who wished to be baptized, but the members, under present circumstances, did not wish to go into a constitution. Now, would it have been right or wrong for one of those preachers to have baptized those persons, if they had given him a satisfactory evidence of their hope in Christ? I would like to have your opinion on the subject.

William H. Smith

Reply: - If there was no Baptist church of our faith and order near, and the preacher, and the brethren in the vicinity, were satisfied that the applicants for baptism were proper subjects of the ordinance, we can see no valid reason why they should not be baptized on profession of their faith in Christ. The commission to preach the gospel, not only authorizes the commissioned ministers, but commands them to baptize believers, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The apostolic practice was to baptize all such, as in the case of Philip, and the Eunuch, the Jailer, Lydia, and many other instances. Yet, where there are constituted churches of the gospel faith and order, within a

reasonable distance, it would be presuming for an itinerant minister to receive and baptize without the concurrence and fellowship of such church. Of course, we only speak of the case as stated above. We do not know whether the brethren mentioned were all agreed in regard to the reception into their fellowship of the persons wishing to be baptized: but on the supposition that there was nothing more in the way, the brethren being unorganized as a church, we should not regard as a valid objection, if that were all.

Middletown, N.Y.,
January 15, 1863

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 308 – 309

BAPTISM.

Elder Beebe: - Is it according to the order of the gospel for an Old Baptist Church to receive as members those who have been baptized by any other denomination of religionists, not recognized by them as the church of Christ, without baptizing them in the fellowship of the Old Order of Baptists?

Your views on the above will oblige
An Inquirer After Truth.

Reply: - To the law, and to the testimony. Whatever is not authorized by the laws of Christ, in relation to the faith or practice of a gospel church, is forbidden. Those who dispute this proposition cannot regard the New Testament as a perfect and complete rule for the government of the kingdom of Christ. If we accept the New Testament as our rule, as the Old Order of Baptists have always professed to do, we must decide this and all other questions as that rule directs. If then a person offers to become a member with us, on condition that we accept as valid baptism administered by denominations not recognized as the church of Christ, such application must be declined, unless we can find authority for it in the New Testament; otherwise we reject that Testament as a complete and infallible rule. We have carefully examined the Scriptures on this subject, and have failed to find either precept or example for any baptism that has not been administered by a gospel administrator, to a gospel subject, in fellowship, at the time of administering, with a gospel church.

By a gospel administrator we mean a member of the church of Christ, fully recognized by the church at the time of administering, as one who is called to the work by the Holy Ghost, and duly set apart to the work of the ministry by solemn ordination to preach the gospel, administer baptism,

and break bread to the church or churches of the saints. If the Scriptures authorize any others to baptize, it also authorizes them to preach and to break bread to the churches; and we cannot consistently recognize them as competent to baptize without also allowing them to preach for and break bread to the same. If there be any such rule given to the church, we have failed to find it, either expressed or implied in the precepts or examples of the apostles and usage of the primitive church.

In the Jewish ritual under the ceremonial law, the carnal Israelites had among their ordinances "*divers washings,*" some of which probably required immersion in water; and the pagans also probably performed similar washings; they were religious denominations. These religious denominations stood in the same relative position to the primitive church as those of modern times do to the church of Christ. Is it supposable that the primitive church would have recognized any of those Jewish or heathen ablutions as Christian baptism?

To admit to our communion any upon what other denominations call baptism is to remove one of the discriminating institutions of the church and inaugurate what is called "Open Communion." Almost all the different denominations now practice (occasionally at least) immersion; even the Mormons; and if any one denomination of them may immerse for us, then so may all. If the precise order of the gospel, and the fellowship of the gospel church may be dispensed with in one thing, why not in all things? And if so, what use shall we have for our Bibles?

By a gospel candidate we mean one who has been born of the Spirit, and is a believer, with all his or her heart in the Lord Jesus Christ, desiring to honor and obey Christ, and to take his yoke, and follow him through evil as well as through

good report. Such an one, on profession of his or her faith, and in obedience to the command of Christ, should be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by one who, like the apostles, is commanded by the Lord Jesus to baptize.

A person professing to be converted, reformed, or desirous to make a public profession of religion, but satisfied to receive what is called baptism by one who is not duly authorized to administer for the gospel church, we cannot recognize as a gospel subject. It is sometimes urged that such an one has been baptized *in good faith.* But how can that be *good faith* which has misled him and wedded him to any branch of anti-christ? Again, the candidate, it is said, was sincere: let this be admitted, and are not others sincere who are sprinkled, or poured, or who regard the ordinance as unimportant? If sincere when doing wrong, after being convinced of the error, should they not be sincere in abandoning the error, and in doing what Christ has commanded them? Saul of Tarsus was probably as sincere when persecuting the church as when feeding the flock of God. Sincerity cannot supply the place of righteousness.

By a gospel church we mean a regularly organized company of regularly baptized believers, walking in the faith and order of the gospel as laid down in the New Testament; standing apart and altogether separate from all other professed religionists on earth, supporting by their fellowship the regular ministers of Christ, as a candlestick supports and holds up a lighted candle, that it may give light to all who are in the house.

It is a fearful thing to tamper with the laws of Christ; who, in the last chapter of the New Testament, says, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches.” “For I testify unto every one that heareth the

words of the prophesy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus."

If any are satisfied that in having been baptized into any body or organization of anti-christ, they have done right, why do they not remain where they are? Why attempt to defile the temple of God by exacting an endorsement of their errors?

It may be argued that some have stood in the fellowship of the church as competent administrators, and have administered while so standing, but afterwards have proved to be hypocrites; and that our position if admitted, would invalidate the baptism administered by them when in good standing. This conclusion is wrong. We are to carefully avoid, so far as in us lies, receiving into the ministry unworthy characters, and to withdraw our support and fellowship from all such, as soon as they develop their true character; but we are not required, nor endued with wisdom to search the hearts, or try the reins of men. Had Judas Iscarot baptized any while he was an apostle, it would have been apostolic baptism; but when he apostatized from that standing he was no longer qualified for the work.

Now if there be any who feel disposed to dispute our position, let such ask themselves which of what we hold to be indispensable requisites for gospel baptism may be omitted, and the baptism be according to the laws of Christ and order of the gospel?

If the baptism administered by a minister of a denomination which is not in fellowship with us is valid gospel baptism, then we may with propriety call on a Mormon, a Presbyterian, a Methodist, or a New School Baptist minister to baptize for us, when candidates apply to us for baptism and membership. Is it not equally as valid when the candidate applies to our church for baptism, if we call on a minister of Satan to administer the ordinance, as when the candidate receives the ordinance at their hands, in the fellowship of some branch of anti-christ? If such a course can be regarded as gospel order, then our churches may at any time call on ministers of the various unscriptural denominations to preach, baptize and break bread; and it would be schismatic for us to organize a Baptist church in any place where there already exists a denomination of a different order, who are willing to preach, baptize and break bread for us. But if this is not the order of the gospel, and sustained by the Scriptures, it should not be allowed.

What we have written on this subject we respectfully submit, not only to the consideration of an Inquirer after Truth, but also to all who belong to the household of faith.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 258 – 261

BAPTISM - REBAPTISM

Elder G. Beebe: - Suppose a member of the Missionary Baptist church, of undoubted piety, and sincere in his attachment to your church, were to apply for admission, would you receive him, without rebaptizing him? What should an individual do who can have no fellowship with the various (so called) benevolent enterprises of the day, and who still believes that the Old School Baptists have gone into error in reference to predestination, &c., and that they so hold and teach these doctrines as to produce bad practical results, supposing him to believe that salvation is wholly of God, and that good works do not procure salvation, but ought to be constantly required of church members as a test of christian character; and an evidence and the chief evidence, of being under grace? These questions are propounded in all honesty and sincerity, and with the purest motives, if a constant and intense desire to see the Baptist church what it has been, constitutes such motives; and I hope you will find it convenient and agreeable to answer them in your next issue of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and in so doing you will gratify one who has been for some time burdened with a sense of the terrible corruptions existing in the christian world.

Tyro, Jan. 21, 1856
J.I. Power

REPLY: If by the Missionary Baptist church our querist means those who are engaged in the modern missionary schemes of the present day, we do not recognize them as the church of Christ, and consequently we cannot hold their administrations valid. Should a member therefore of that class of professed Baptists, apply for membership or communion with the church of Christ, we should suppose he ought to be baptized according to the order of the Gospel,

though he may have been immersed by the modern Missionists. And on the supposition that the applicant is a person of undoubted piety, we have no doubt it would be his wish to be baptized in an orderly manner, by a regular minister of Christ, duly authorized to administer that ordinance, and sustained in so administering it, by the fellowship of the church of God. If, however, a person who has been regularly baptized before the division took place between the church, and those Missionists who went out from us, because they were not of us, has been led off into the modern schemes of the day, and having discovered his error, and returned with his confession to the church, he would not, in our judgment, require to be again baptized. A person who has been once regularly baptized in the fellowship of the church of Christ, by a minister of the church duly recognized at the time by the church, under no circumstances requires rebaptism.

A person who can have no fellowship for the various so-called benevolent enterprises of the present day, and who still believes that the Old Baptists have gone into error in reference to predestination, &c.. We think such an one should remain where he is, until he can find a church sufficiently pure for him to unite with without defiling his garments. There is a wide difference between going up to the house of the Lord, and being so holy that the house of the Lord must come up to us. We know of but one way of holding the doctrine of predestination, and that is as it is taught in the Bible, and by the Spirit of truth. Any person, however pious he may be, who believes that an unwavering belief in the Bible doctrine of eternal predestination, is productive of bad practical results, cannot make a sound member of the church, and he ought not to subscribe to what he does not believe. And furthermore, we give it as our honest opinion, that any person professing to believe in predestination, who does **NOT** find **ALL** the tendencies of that doctrine to be such

as humbles him in the dust before the thrice holy God, and to inspire within him a profound reverence, and desire to be fully conformed to the will of Jehovah, lacks the evidence that he is born of God, and therefore should refrain from making any profession of religion until by a new and heavenly birth he is qualified to "see the kingdom of God."

There is a palpable contradiction involved in the idea that any person who denies the doctrine of predestination, can at the same time believe that salvation is wholly of the Lord. The practical result of God's predestination is conformity to the image of the Redeemer. "For whom He did foreknow, them He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." Thus the Bible holds the doctrine; to hold it any other way is virtually to reject it. God Himself saves sinners, only as He has predestinated them to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, and has made them acceptable in the Beloved. And as salvation certainly follows predestination, and results from it, so good works as certainly follow salvation and result from it. For it is God "that worketh in you" (His children) "both to will and to do according to His good pleasure."

We do not doubt the sincerity of the desire of our correspondent, to see the Baptist church what it has been. When he shall see her from the eminence on which John stood, she will appear to him a holy city, coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband. The perfection of beauty, for she is all glorious within, and her garments are of wrought gold. She is fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army of banners. It is very true the poor, vile, bodies of God' dear children, are black as the tents of Kedar, but that which is born of God is as fair as the curtains of Solomon. But in looking after the church of God, we are to know no man after the flesh. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption

inherit incorruption. The kingdom is spiritual, and those who inherit it arc spiritual; these vile bodies will not participate in the inheritance until they shall have been sown in weakness and raised in power, sown corruptible, but raised in incorruption; sown a natural body, but raised a spiritual body. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

That only is the church of Christ which is what she has been, for the church is the kingdom which the God of heaven has set up, and which shall never be removed. "God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God will help her, arid that right early." "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire." May it be our happy lot, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to enter in through her gates, and have a right to the tree of life.

"There would I find my settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger nor a guest,
But like a child at home."

One word in conclusion, to our correspondent. Would you behold the beauty of the Lord, His love, His dove, His undefiled, never look down in searching for His loveliness. She is "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." For behold the mountain of the house of the Lord is established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. She is the fairest among women, clothed with the garments of salvation, and covered with the robe of righteousness. Look

up for her, she is clothed with the sun, and the moon is under her feet, and on her head is a crown of twelve stars. If you have too large a stock of perfection to allow you to be identified with her, wait until every rag of it is stripped off, and then you will be glad when they say to you, "Come, let us go up to the house of the Lord."

We know but little about the "christian world," only that our Lord has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulations." And that the world by wisdom knew not God. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." - (I John 2:15,16) And again, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." (I John 4:4-6)

The spirit of error which is in the world, has invented many counterfeits of christianity, but in reality the terms *Christian* and *world* are of opposite signification. To be a christian is to be called out of the world, and that we may be known as christians, we must renounce the world, for we cannot possess the love of the Father, and also the love of the world. It is true, there are terrible corruptions in the world, and especially in that portion of it which make pretension to christianity, and there are terrible corruptions even in the depraved worldly nature of the children of God, which every christian feels and laments; but the church is nevertheless the body, and members of Christ, quickened with His Spirit, and made perfect in His righteousness.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times

“BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH.”

BROTHER Buckley of Alabama has sent us a printed copy of a document purporting to be a “Baptist Confession of Faith,” desiring our opinion of the same. By whom this confession is made, we are not informed; but we sincerely hope it is not even an adopted child of any of our Old School Baptist brethren, either of Alabama or any other state. Many parts of it are as inharmonious with the scriptures, with christian experience, and with the general doctrinal views of Old School Baptists, as are the sentiments of the Mahometan Alcoran. It would require too great a space of our paper to copy the entire confession, but we will copy and remark upon such parts as we consider most objectionable. Let it not he supposed, however, that we approve of those articles on which we offer no comments; we consider the whole defective, with only a sufficient semblance of truth to decoy some well-meaning but poorly taught christians. Passing by the errors and defects of the first four articles, we will notice the fifth:

V. *Of Justification*. That the great gospel blessing, which Christ of his fullness bestows on such as believe in him, is justification; that justification consists in the pardon of sin and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not’ in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through his own redemption and righteousness; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

This article is altogether erroneous, and a perversion of the scriptural doctrine of justification. Neither pardon of sin or

promise of life ever did or possibly can justify a guilty sinner; nor do the scriptures anywhere teach any such doctrine. To illustrate the subject, suppose a criminal convicted of the crime of murder, and by the law sentenced to die, should receive from the executive power a pardon, and with it a promise of life and liberty; would that constitute him a just man, and wash him from the stain of blood? Certainly not. He is just as guilty as though he were hung. Whether executed according to law, or pardoned and suffered to run at large, does not change his guilt; he is a murderer. Justification, in a gospel sense, removes, or rather takes away all guilt; and a justified soul is made as free from guilt as though he had never sinned. If pardon alone could justify us, the Savior's blood was not required; it would then have been sufficient for God, against whom lie had sinned, to forgive the offender without reference to law or justice. But the testimony of the bible shows that the work of justification is that by which the guilty are made just. Therefore the blood of Christ was demanded, for nothing short of his blood could take away sill; his blood cleanseth from all guilt. While pardon and justification both occupy prominent places in the gospel, they are altogether distinct in nature and effect; pardon is an acquittal from punishment, but justification delivers from guilt. To remove the guilt from his people, Christ actually bore their sins in his own body on the cross, and put away their sins by his own sacrifice, was delivered up for their offenses, and raised again for their justification. Justification has to do with the law, and required an atonement satisfactory to the utmost demands of the law; so that the law which held is in condemnation as sinners, requires that we should be set at liberty as just or as justified persons. Pardon proceeds from a satisfaction rendered to divine justice, in which we were personated and identified, in the identity of that body that bore our sins on the cross. In order to avoid the force of truth, the arminians would so separate justification from the atonement, as to preach a

general or universal atonement and a limited justification, and so connect justification and pardon as to represent both accessible to all mankind and certain to none. Justification is inseparably connected with and based upon the atonement, and the atonement is predicated upon the right vested in Christ as the near kinsman to redeem.

The right to redeem captives belongs naturally only to those to whom such captives belonged prior to their captivity. The church of God belonged to Christ her Head before she had any being in Adam, and consequently before she went into captivity; being in a state of captivity, a ransom price was required for her deliverance. That price could not be estimated in silver and gold; in nothing short of the precious blood of Christ. Why his blood? Because the right of property was in him before the property or church were captivated. Had rivers of her blood been shed, it could not have redeemed the church, as the right of redemption belonged alone to Christ. The execution of the sentence of the law against the guilty upon an innocent sufferer, could not exculpate the guilty nor satisfy any law founded in justice; but, by virtue of pre-existing relationship, and indissoluble, eternal union between Christ, the Head, and the church, which, is his body, Christ's one offering has for ever put away sin, and those for whom his sacrifice was made are freely justified through his blood, and completely secured from condemnation; for "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again," &c. We are brought experimentally into the knowledge and enjoyment of this justification by regeneration: but we pass to notice the next article.

VI. *Of the Freeness of Salvation*. That the blessings of salvation are made free to ail by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and

obedient faith: and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

This article is false from beginning to end. In what part of the gospel are the blessings of salvation made free to those inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, who are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, or to that people against whom God has said, Reprobate silver shall men call them, for I have rejected them? Or that people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever? Or those which were before ordained to condemnation? Or to those who stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto they were appointed? Or to those who like natural brute beasts were made to be taken and destroyed? The blessings of salvation embrace all the blessings of the new covenant, wherewith God has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. – Eph. i. 4. Eternal and immutable love, stronger than sin or death; eternal, indissoluble union to Christ the Head of the church, eternal election, redemption, deliverance from guilt and wrath, regeneration, a new heart, a new spirit: love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness and faith, are among all the blessings of salvation, and how can they be free to those who are now in hell, or to those who die in their sins? The sentiment involved in this declaration is, that the provisions of salvation are made alike for all mankind, and the benefits of them made to depend upon the volition of the human will. But the words of God declare that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; and that all those unto whom power is given to become the sous of God, are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God. Deliverance from sin is one of the blessings of salvation, as

we have shown, and if deliverance from sin be free to all sinners, may not devils avail themselves of it? The doctrine is preposterous and false. The gospel makes salvation free for none; it is a proclamation of that full, free, and finished salvation which God has provided for his own elect, whom he has saved and called with a holy calling; not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. – 2 Tim. i. 9. And it is equally false, that it is the immediate duty of all to accept the blessings of salvation; for neither salvation in the abstract, nor any of its blessings were ever offered to any being, by any authority found in the divine testimony. God has never offered to save a sinner; therefore it cannot be the duty of any to accept of what has never been offered to them. We read much of offers of salvation and mercy in the filthy creeds of arminian workmongers, but not a word of it in the volume of divine inspiration. The doctrine is of men and devils, and altogether discordant with the revelation of grace and truth, embraced in the scriptures. There is not a truly regenerate soul on earth whose experience does not prove the absurdity and falsehood of the doctrine. Souls that have experienced the new birth, have seen the time when they would have freely given ten thousand worlds, if they possessed them, for one gleam of hope that there was, or could lie any salvation for them; but as to offers and acceptances, these they knew were out of the question. And when they have received an evidence of their interest in the salvation of God, they have discovered that it proceeded from the settled, eternal and immutable purpose and decree of God, and not from any will or works of their own: but the article before us goes on to state in what way its arminian author supposes that the blessings of salvation are to be accepted; namely, by a cordial and obedient faith. The faith of the gospel which accompanies salvation, follows, but does not precede regeneration; it is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God.

Christ, and not the sinner, is the Author and Finisher of it. It is distinguished from the faith of wicked men and devils, as that faith which is the operation of God; and that which works by love and purifies the heart. The sinner in his natural state is without hope; faith is the substance of things hoped for; how then can the unregenerate put in requisition that faith which none but quickened souls ever possessed? Is not faith itself one of the blessings of salvation? Yet we are told that the blessings of salvation are free to be received by all men, by a cordial and obedient faith; that faith is a condition of faith! What consistency! But the article goes on to state, that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ. His being dead in trespasses and sins; under the curse of the law; under condemnation and wrath; full of enmity to God; with a heart that is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, with a throat like an open sepulcher, with a month that is full of cursing and bitterness, with feet swift to shed blood, with misery and destruction in all his ways, and having never known the way of peace, nor the fear of God, with a carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to his law, and which neither indeed can be; yet this article can discover nothing but a voluntary refusal to submit to Jesus Christ, in the way of his enjoying the blessings of salvation! How different the language of eternal truth on this subject: “No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up again at the last day.” Again, The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, (and the blessings of salvation are among the things of the Spirit; for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing,) neither can we know them, because they are spiritually discerned. So this article of faith is not the faith of God’s elect, but is an article of the faith of devils; not however believed by devils, for they know better; but by devils invented, and by their seducing spirits palmed off upon arminians. But there is yet another heresy

embraced in this abominable article, viz: "which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation." What strange confusion! Condemnation aggravated beyond that of the greatest sinner on earth! But as the legs of the lame cannot be equal, we will pass on to notice what is implied in this sentiment, viz: that the condemnation of a guilty sinner, by the fiery law of God, may be aggravated or enhanced by his rejection of the gospel. Now if this be true, the gospel becomes to that soul not only the minister of condemnation, but of an aggravated condemnation, and that in direct contradiction of the express testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ, who declares that he came not to condemn the world, &c. It is not for the want of repentance, or faith, or an acceptance of the gospel, that sinners are condemned and damned, but for being sinners against God. But we will pass to the article –

"VIII. *Of God's Purpose of Grace*. That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the gospel; is the foundation of christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence."

Election is truly the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; but this truth of God this article turns into a lie, by subjoining to it the declaration that God's purpose according to which he saves sinners is perfectly consistent with man's free agency,

whereas the testimony of the scriptures is the very reverse: "Who hath. saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." "Therefore it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy." "Not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." The doctrine of man's free agency is not found in the bible. If man as an agent is free, he cannot be a sinner; if free, he is under no restraint or obligation to God or man. To be a free agent, maim cannot be an accountable being; for if he is an accountable being, and amenable to God for his conduct, he is not free; and if free, he has a right to do as he pleases. But it is not of man that walketh to direct his steps; and therefore the election of grace is not in harmony with the arminian notion of free agency; but is set forth by an inspired apostle as in accordance with the very opposite of what the workmongers call free agency: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, hot of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." – Rom. ix. 11—16. And after stating what the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, the apostle adds in verse 18, "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Does this look much like free agency? But Paul anticipated how this truth would set upon an arminian's stomach in verse 19: "Thou wilt surely say unto me, Why doth he yet find fault ? For who hath resisted his will Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him

that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" &c. Be it remembered that in these scriptures the apostle, by the infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, illustrates the sovereignty of God "according to election," and not election according to man's asserted free agency. There is no more harmony between the purpose of God in election and what is called man's free agency, than there is between heaven and hell, or any other direct opposites. Another expression in this eighth article is, that the doctrine of God's electing grace encourages the use of means in the highest degree! Now if what we have quoted from the mouth of God, that it is neither of the will nor works of men, that God will have mercy on whom he will, and that he hardeneth whom he will, &c., encourages the use of means in the highest degree, then is this item of the article well sustained. But the term *means*, when used in regard to procuring grace or salvation, belongs to the arminian vocabulary – it is not in the bible, nor is it in harmony with any sentiment that is taught in the bible. There are no more means used in the quickening of a dead sinner, than there were in the creation of the world. The work of salvation is as immediately and exclusively the work of God, as is the work of raising the dead, receiving the righteous into heaven, and turning the wicked into hell.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
March 15, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 411 – 419

“BAPTIST CONFESSION OF FAITH”

(Concluded.)

“X. *Harmony of the Law and Gospel*. That the law of God is the eternal and unchangable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin: to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned. obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.”

That the law of God is holy, just and good, is demonstrated by the express declaration of an inspired apostle; and that it is, as a standard of right, inflexible, immutable and everlasting, will scarcely be denied by any; but that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin, is not quite so clear. If this position were correct, the very moment a quickened sinner is made to loathe sin, he would find himself released from all inability; a thing which all christians know is not true. “The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Not simply because he loves sin, but because the law is spiritual, and the sinner is carnal, sold under sin. In this article, the writer and the holders of the doctrine betray a very confused idea of both the law and the gospel. They mistake the nature of the gospel, in supposing that one great end of it is to qualify mankind to keep the law. This certainly is not the case; for the gospel is glad tidings of great joy to those who are prepared by the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost to

receive it; but it was never designed to enable us to personally meet and fulfill the requisitions of the law of God. If the design or end of the gospel was to remove from man kind their inability to keep the law, we must unavoidably come to one of the two following conclusions, viz.: first, that the gospel has failed to accomplish that great object for which Infinite Wisdom designed it; or, second, that all man kind are now able to render a perfect and perpetual obedience to its exceedingly broad commandments. Either of these conclusions would involve the most degrading and blasphemous reflections upon the being and attributes of Jehovah. If in relation to the first, God is disappointed in what he designed should result from the law or gospel, his wisdom is impeached. That cannot be infinite wisdom which would look for effects without providing an adequate cause to produce them; and if the wisdom of God did not, with infallible certainty, comprehend all things, the end from the beginning, it must be susceptible of improvement by the experiment of passing events; and if the wisdom of God can undergo any variation, either for better or for worse, his immutability is also involved; and as one of the perfections of God cannot be impaired without effecting all of them, the moment we take the position that either the law or gospel has failed to secure all that was contemplated in the mind and wisdom of God, we virtually say, with the fool, “There is no God.” Nor scarcely shall ye find less difficulty in taking the other horn of the dilemma; for if we assume that the gospel has removed the impediment to our perfect obedience to the law of God, destroyed the love of sin which, this article says, embodies all the inability of man, we shall thereby impeach the veracity of God, who has certainly denounced, at least, a portion of the human family as “Cursed children, that can not cease to sin.” And as God has said that the carnal mind cannot be subject to his law, even since the gospel, no man can assert that the inability of mankind, or of any man, to

render perfect obedience to the law of God is removed by the gospel, without charging God with falsehood.

"To deliver fallen men from the love of sin, and restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience of the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church." Now if this complicated jargon of sounds were true, instead of one great object (if we can count) there would be at least two, viz.: first, to deliver from the love of sin; and second, to bring into a state of unfeigned law obedience; but neither of these objects are presented in divine testimony, in a way harmonious with the doctrine of this article.

There are no provisions in either the law or the gospel to deliver fallen sinners, in the general sense expressed, from the love of sin. It is true that God has made ample and certain provisions in the purpose of his grace, to destroy, in his children, (the election of grace) the love of sin; and it is also true that a proclamation of such provision to the heirs of promise is one important announcement of the gospel. But it is well known by every heaven-born soul, that the love of sin is destroyed in the children of God by the regenerating power and grace of the Holy Ghost; and by nothing short of the Holy Spirit can this be effected, much less by that "another gospel" contemplated in the heterogeneous article under consideration: a gospel connected with what is called "means of grace, a cant phrase of arminians, but never found in the vocabulary of those who are experimentally taught of God.

But the work of the Spirit, in destroying, in renewed souls, the love of sin, is not, as asserted in the article, to enable them to obey the law of God. Christians, of all men on earth, are the most sensible of their utter inability and complete helplessness. But that Spirit by whom they are made alive, after destroying in them the love of sin, shows them the

perfect righteousness of their Redeemer, Jesus Christ, as, not only commensurate with all the requisitions of law and justice, but also sufficient to elevate them above what they were or could possibly be as they stood in Adam, even in primeval rectitude. Instead of teaching them that they are now able to keep the law, it teaches the very opposite lesson; they are slain to the law, dead to the law, redeemed from under the law, and brought under law to Christ, whose yoke they find to be easy, and his burden light. But the "harmony of the law and gospel," which the writer of this article seems desirous to establish, is something like the following: That man having fallen into sin, the law was given for his restoration; but finding that men would not or could not avail themselves of salvation by the deeds of the law, the gospel was added, as a second experiment, to aid man in saving himself by the deeds of the law, and thus both law and gospel, having the same end in view, are in harmony. Such delusive notions have their bearing to make graceless arminians preach a mongrel system, a workmongrel gospel; but our natural bodies could as well be fattened on winter fog, as the children of God could be made to grow and thrive on such a system of doctrine. But we will pass on to article –

"XIII. *Of the Christian Sabbath*. That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that rest which remaineth for the people of God."

The anti-typical or christian Sabbath is not by any divine authority confined to the first or any other day or days of the week. It commenced with the gospel dispensation, and will terminate on earth with the dissolution of the world. The obligation of christians to appropriate a portion of their time to the social worship of God, is not predicated upon the

supposed perpetuity of the Jewish Sabbaths, or a continuation of the Abrahamic covenant. The authors of this creed do not attempt to give any references to scriptural authority for their professed faith; and they find themselves as greatly puzzled to find any, as their pædo brethren are in proving that their infant sprinkling system was embraced in the covenant of circumcision. It is nowhere in the bible said that "the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath;" but it is expressly said, Let no man therefore judge you in meats, nor in drink, nor in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ. Those who have never been slain to the law, who regard the gospel only as an assistant to help us to keel) the law, are for ever grasping after shadows and always miss the substance. Their constrained service at the worldly sanctuary is tiresome; their language is, "When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? And the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?" – Amos viii. 5, 6. One day in seven is as many as such people can well afford to be religious in; and even that is devoted mostly to worldly business, such as school teaching, tract peddling, dunning and collecting money, selling sermons and prayers at a stipulated price, and wiping their mouths and saying they have not sinned. But such as the Son has made free from the bondage of the legal dispensation, have entered into that rest which remaineth for the people of God; Christ is their Sun, the light of his countenance constitutes their day, and all the days and hours of their sojourn on earth are not too much to be devoted to his praise. It is not a weariness to them, for his yoke is easy and his burden is light. They are not like the workmongers laboring to prepare themselves for that rest which remaineth, but they have already entered into it, and have ceased from

their own works as God ceased from the works of creation and rested on the seventh day, and as Christ ceased from the work of redemption when he had obtained eternal redemption for his people, and entered into rest. But the wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, for they continually cast up mire and dirt.

We have before observed that there are other objectionable things embraced in this “confession of faith;” we have, in accordance with brother Buckleys request, pointed out what we consider most objectionable. And as the items which we have dwelt upon are of general interest, we hope the brethren in other parts of our land may be led to examine this matter. For ourself, we are getting more out of favor with written creeds, confessions of faith, &c. Brethren cannot too well understand each other in regard to their doctrine and practice; but who shall dare to say that the New Testament is not a sufficient standard of faith and practice? We have received several confessions from Old School brethren and churches for publication, some of which have appeared in our columns; but with none of them are we so well pleased as with the book which God has given us, and the heavenly Interpreter, whose office it is to lead the children of God into all truth. May all who love the Lord be ever under his salutary influence, and feel in their hearts that they are not their own, that they are bought with a price, and that it is their privilege to glorify God in their bodies arid spirits which are his.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
April 15, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 419 – 425

BAPTIST STATE SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION.

Some one has sent us a slip taken, as we presume, from the Richmond, Virginia *Herald,* containing the following abridged account of some of their doings, viz.:

"Introductory Address by R. H. Bagby, D.D.

The Virginia Baptist State Sunday School Convention met last evening, in the Second Baptist Church.

Long before the hour appointed for the meeting, the church was crowded to suffocation.

The altar was neatly decorated with evergreens; in the centre of an arch formed by Magnolia leaves, was a shield designed by Mr. W. Montague, painter, with the motto, "Feed my lambs." On the shield was painted an open Bible.

The exercises of the evening were opened with a beautiful hymn by the children of the Sunday Schools of the Second and Grace Church.

After which Mr. C. H. Ryland moved that the Rev. Dr. Burrows be appointed temporary chairman, and Rev. J. Hardy Hendren of Norfolk, secretary *pro. tem.* This motion was unanimously carried.

On taking the chair, Mr. Burrows, in the name of the Sunday Schools of Richmond, welcomed to the city the representatives of the Baptist Sunday Schools of the state of Virginia. He said that they were glad that there were so many present, and he was pleased to see such a spirit of unanimity throughout the state. They were cordially welcomed to this

city, and to the deliberations which were about to commence. At the conclusion of Dr. Burrow's remarks, Rev. Mr. Cornelius Tyree offered a most fervent prayer.

The Chair then announced that the Convention was ready to proceed to the election of permanent officers as the first business in order.

Mr. Ellyson suggested that previous to the permanent organization, Dr. Bagbee be requested to deliver the introductory address.

The suggestion was adopted by the Convention, and the Reverend Doctor was introduced by the Chair, and proceeded to deliver the address, of which we make the following brief synopsis:

He said, 'I need hardly say that I am not at all responsible for the position I now occupy. It has been assigned me by others who have a right to control, and I accept, with diffidence and with pleasure.'

The subject of the address has already been announced - 'The relation of the Sunday School to the Church.' He thought it was well in the introduction of a Sunday School Convention to enquire what authority the word of God furnished for such an institution? 'Since no mention is made of Sunday Schools in the Scriptures, what right have we to claim for them divine authority, or to expect upon them the blessing of heaven?' He said that in making it the duty of the church to convert the world, Christ had authorized and required the use of all agencies intelligent piety can adopt or invent for the accomplishment of this great end. Among these, the speaker said, the Sunday School stood pre-eminent. 'Sunday Schools, though not even mentioned in the Scriptures, are nevertheless scriptural.' He said there was no good excuse

for the church that had not a Sunday School. If there were no children, the members of the church themselves should meet, and together study the word of God. He was also in favor that every church should hold monthly Sunday School prayer meetings."

Remarks: – In the earlier days of our editorial career, when the separation between the children of the bond woman and the children of the promise was progressing, in obedience to the command of God in Galatians 4:30 and Genesis 21:10-12, we were frequently brought into collision with the new order of professed Baptists on the subject of Sunday Schools, as well as other unscriptural innovations upon the faith and order of the Primitive Baptists; but since the separation has been consummated, and the lines of demarcation fully known, we have paid but little attention to their idolatrous progression in iniquity. Nor do we now propose to renew the discussion with them. They are joined to their idols, and we will let them alone. As the Baptist church of Christ, we are no longer responsible for their admonitions. The names which they assume are the number of the name of the apocalyptic beast; it is the number of a man, and by no means signifying the "remnant (which is) according to the election of grace (Romans 9:5)." *Baptist,* as a name, in its scriptural signification, has in all former ages from the days of John the Baptist, been used to identify the church of Christ, composed of his baptized followers, in distinction from all the sects and denominations of anti-christ. But when that sacred name has been desecrated by thieves who have entered, not by the door, into the sheepfold of Christ, but have climbed up some other way, and have come but to steal and to kill, and to destroy, their object in assuming a name which they hate, is obviously to take away their reproach (Isaiah 4:1). Yet lest that name should subject them to the persecutions and obloquy which the church of Christ has to endure, they have adopted also the number of

the name of the beast, which, being interpreted, reads thus: "The Baptist State Sunday School Convention." The first expressing what they profess to be ecclesiastically, as religionists; the next is to show what they are politically, and in the adulterous connection of church and State; and the other name, Sunday School, for which institution, in this very extract they confess they have no Bible authority, they show that their reliance for success is not in God, but in a humanly devised institution; a strange conglomeration of religion, politics and worldly institutions.

Their description of their altar shows very clearly that it is consecrated to an "unknown god." Altogether unlike to any altar described in the Scriptures, or approved as an altar to the God of the Bible. Not like the altar of rough stones on which God forbid the Hebrews to apply any human tool or embellishment. This idol shrine is decorated, and made more attractive to unquickened children and adults, than the altars of brick which the carnal Israelites built to provoke the God of heaven (Isaiah 65:3). "Decorated with evergreens," comparing well with the offering of Cain, of the productions of the dust of the earth, yet attractive to the eyes of the uncircumcised. "In the centre an arch of Magnolia leaves," produced from the earth groaning under the curse of God. However appropriate for an idol temple, it is insulting and defiant to the God of heaven. The painting, too, just look at it. A shield, a passage of Scripture, detached from its connection, and perverted, like a pearl cast among swine, or as a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. And a painted Bible. How expressive! How much protection can the painted picture of a shield afford, when the earth and skies shall be removed, and the elements of nature melt with fervent heat? The picture of a Bible, a show of piety, a form of godliness; but the picture of a book in which the "Reverend Doctor" can find no authority for Sunday Schools. Just such a Bible as we suppose best suited to their purpose. A shade without the

substance. The words of Christ to Peter are adopted as a *motto,* and so perverted as to make them seem to be applied to a vast assemblage of unconverted, or unquickened children, gathered by the attraction of Magnolia leaves, evergreens, fine paintings and heathen altars, and persuaded to trust their final and everlasting salvation to gods which their fathers did not know, to gods which have come newly up.

Our object in noticing this extract was more particularly to review the reasoning of the "Reverend Doctor," on whose head is written names of blasphemy, by assuming a title which is the name of the supreme God alone. "Holy and Reverend is his name."

The doctor admits that in the outset it is proper to show the relation of the Sunday School to the church. This, however, he has failed to do; but left us to infer that it is as the relation of Ishmael to Sarah. But he said, "Since there is no mention made of Sunday Schools in the Scriptures, what right have we to claim for them divine authority, or to expect for them the blessing of heaven?" He said, that in making it the duty of the church to convert the world, Christ had authorized and required the use of all agencies intelligent piety can adopt or invent for the accomplishment of this great end. This inference would have some force if the Doctor could show from the Scriptures where, when, or in what instructions, ordinances or commands, Christ has made it the duty of the church to convert the world. We challenge him, or any other being in earth or heaven, to prove that such a duty has ever been imposed on the church. Had such a duty been laid upon the church, with no specific instructions as to the *modus operandi,* we would then agree that the church might feel at liberty to tax her own ingenuity, and resort to such measures and agencies as she deemed most likely to effect the object, whether Sunday Schools, Bible Classes,

infant sprinkling, thumb screws, racks, fire or sword. But no such duty is enjoined; nor is it possible for the church, or even for angels, to convert, savingly, a single soul of all the race of Adam. There is no name or power under heaven given among men whereby we might be saved, but the name of Christ. His name is Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. It must certainly require the logic of a learned Doctor of divinity to show that Sunday Schools, though not even mentioned in the Scriptures, are nevertheless scriptural. Who would not build colleges and theological seminaries to produce such profound logicians? A learned Presbyterian in this county once argued in the same way. "True," said he, "the Bible says nothing about infant sprinkling; but what does this silence say? Ah, it does not say we shall not sprinkle them."

Middletown, N.Y
July 1, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 220 – 224

BAPTIZED AGAIN WITH WATER.

Pike Co., Ark.
Oct. 17, 1870.

DEAR BROTHER: - If it is not asking too much, I wish you would give your views in regard to those disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus, Acts 19:1-7, whether they were baptized again with water?

Yours in hope of eternal life,
P.A. Lightsey.

REPLY. Our version of this subject seems somewhat obscure, and some have found it very difficult, from the reading, to determine with certainty whether Paul recognized the baptism of these twelve disciples as valid gospel baptism, or required them to be baptized again before he laid his hands on them when they received the gift of the Holy Ghost. Our present impression is that they were again baptized before Paul laid his hands upon them. It is certain that John's baptism, in some important particulars, differed from that of the apostles'; not however in regard to the mode, or manner of its performance, nor in regard to its signification; for John immersed those whom he baptized in water, and in the ordinance set forth a death, burial and resurrection, as fully as it was signified when administered by the apostles, or other gospel administrators. And he administered it only to such as brought forth fruits meet for repentance. So that the example of Jesus, in his baptism by John, is a perfect pattern for all his saints, as to the ordinance and its figurative import. Yet John's baptism was anterior to the setting up of the gospel kingdom, and to the accession of our Redeemer to his Mediatorial throne. He was himself under the law, until he had fulfilled all its jots and tittles. He, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, became obedient to the law,

even unto death, and in his resurrection brought up with him, from under the law, the body of his church. When he was made flesh, he was made of a woman, and made under the law, to redeem his people, or members, from under the law, but when he had done and suffered all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, he entered into his glory. Having, as it behooved him, suffered, died on the cross, and arose from the dead on the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should thenceforth be preached in his name; he assured his apostles that all power in heaven and in earth was now committed to his hands, and he bade them therefore to "go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This they were to do in his name, that is by his authority, and in obedience to his command, as the LORD JESUS.

We observe, John did not baptize by his command, nor in his name, as the *Lord Jesus*; for he said, "This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me. And I knew him not; but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God." John 1:30-34.

John received his authority to preach and baptize from God, but not from Christ *as the Messiah that was to come after him*. And Paul said to the disciples at Ephesus, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people {to whom he preached,} that they should believe on him {Christ} which should come after him, {John} that is on

Christ Jesus." Thus Paul explained to the twelve disciples the peculiar nature and designs of John's baptism. As in anticipation of the coming of him who should baptize with the Holy Ghost, the way of whom John was sent to prepare before him; and he required of those Jews to whom he administered baptism, that they should believe on him that was to come after him. John's baptism unto repentance signified an abandonment of Judaism, as a ground of hope for justification before God, and a profession of faith in him that was to come. But after his coming in all the glory of his Father, and when he should ascend and sit upon the throne of his kingdom which his Father had appointed for him, baptism was no more to be administered in prospect of a Savior to come, or of a kingdom to be set up. John must decrease, but Jesus must increase. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever." Isa. 9:7.

Those who were baptized to John's baptism before the kingdom of Christ was organized, were baptized with the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost, or on being received into the gospel organization. Those baptized to John's baptism were pledged to believe on him that was to come; those afterwards were baptized on profession of faith in him who had already come, having believed on him before they were baptized.

The twelve disciples whom Paul found at Ephesus, were not baptized by John, but *to his* baptism, by Apollos, a long time after the organization of the church, and inauguration of Christ as the King of Zion.

The only defect in the ministration of Apollos, of which we are informed, was that he knew only of John's baptism, until

Aquila and Priscilla instructed him in the way of the Lord more perfectly. He was eloquent and mighty in the scriptures, and he mightily convinced the Jews, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. If this defect on the part of Apollos could have been tolerated, there would have been no occasion for teaching him the way of the Lord more perfectly; but as it could not be sanctioned, it was necessary that those who had been irregularly baptized by him to John's baptism, should be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Hence, from all these considerations, we conclude these twelve disciples were baptized again, and in the name of the Lord Jesus, before Paul laid his hands on them.

Although the command of Jesus was to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, yet as it is to be thus observed and administered now, under the gospel dispensation, by his special command, in recognition of his supreme authority, as the head over all things to his church, it must be in *his name*; that is, by his authority and command, that his duly authorized ministers are now required to baptize believers in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

John did not baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and therefore they who were baptized after his manner had not heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. Neither did he baptize in the name of the Lord Jesus, but saying to the people that they should believe on him at a subsequent period. Paul said to these twelve, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him; that is, on Christ Jesus. When they {these twelve} heard this, {which Paul said to them, explanatory of John's baptism} they {these twelve} were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," or in the way and manner which he had commanded that his disciples should

be baptized; namely, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

We give the foregoing as our present understanding of the subject; we once held a different view; but on a close investigation, we are convinced that these disciples who had been irregularly baptized, probably by Apollos, were afterwards regularly baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, by Paul, or by some other duly authorized administrator.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1870.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE BEAST AND THE SADDLE.

DR. GOING, editor of the *American Baptist,* in noticing a meeting and proceedings of the New School Baptist Baltimore Association, claims for them that they are the real Old School Baptists, and professes to put the saddle on the right beast. His article is copied in full in Vol. V. page 38, accompanied with the following remarks:

As Dr. Going proposes putting the saddle on the right animal, we will for his edification say that the Old School brethren do not feel disposed to quarrel with him or with Messrs. Healy and Jones, about the *saddle.* As the Old School have renounced the beast to which the saddle, bridle, girt and stirrups belong, we readily relinquish the entire tackle to the Doctor for the benefit of the Lady of Kingdoms, whose name is written upon her forehead, and who sitteth upon a scarlet colored beast

When Balaam, the false prophet, set out as a missionary, under the patronage of a foreign board, and in full prospect, like modern missionaries, of great honor and plenty of gold, we are told that his first preparation for an outfit was that he arose and saddled his beast. We have somewhere heard this subject thus explained:

First. Balaam represented all false prophets, or hirelings, called by men to the work of cursing Israel and blessing Moab.

Second. That his beast represented all the priest-ridden congregations and people who are made use of to bear up and carry the false ministers when engaged in their wicked missions.

Third. That the saddle represented the tax or methods of collecting funds to make the seat of the false ministry comfortable, and that the prophet arising and putting the saddle on the ass, set forth in a figure how anti-christian teachers should rise, (as at the present time illustrated by fact,) and saddle the poor, stupid and beastly of our race with the entire burden of transporting their false prophets to the best market for their doctrines. This saddle is sometimes buckled on to the people by the strong girt of legislative power, and then the *"galled jade may wince" in rain.*

Whether the above illustration is the direct meaning of the fact recorded of Balaam or not, we will not pretend at this time to say, but at all events, there appears in the Dr.'s remarks to be a reaching after the saddle on the part of the New School, and we exhort our brethren of the Baltimore Association, if they have any part of this saddle in their camp, that they forthwith send it over to the Balaamiteish prophets who have, and do demand it. We have never seen the Minutes of Messrs. Healy and Jones' Association, which they held at Washington City, but we learn by what we have copied from the *American Baptist* that they have attempted to prove from circumstances that the Baltimore Association has been in the habit in former times of riding out of the Old School track on this popular saddle, and we are not prepared to fully contradict the charge; that they have dabbled from time to time since their original constitution in some of the popular institutions is very probable; we are happy to say that at their last session they retained the saddle and all its appendages, and with it all those prophets who can ride gracefully on it.

The loss of members sustained by the Baltimore Association in consequence of returning the saddle to its right beast is very incorrectly stated in the article alluded to, as we are informed by brethren belonging to the Baltimore Association.

Two of the above churches have, since the meeting at Washington, joined the Maryland Union Association, and the Mount Zion Church, of Baltimore, we are told, has vetoed the proceedings of Mr. Clark, their late pastor, to whom it is. said they never gave any authority to withdraw from the Baltimore Association; and besides these we learn that many members of the churches represented by J. H. Jones have no mind to have the saddle put on their backs, and some of the members of the Second Baltimore Church are not well suited with the idea of being saddled. how Elder Osbourne, who we believe still holds his membership in that church, will bear the saddle, is for him to say; it is thought, however, by some who have read his communications, that the New School would do well to just put a sheep skin between him and the saddle, lest he might balk.

But to speak without a parable; it seems that by the resolution of the Baltimore Association some of the leaders of the New School party among them took the liberty, as representatives of their several churches, to withdraw, and after they had withdrawn the Association dropped their names from their Minutes. These, with one or more churches which had before been dropped for heresy, (gross Arminianism,) held a meeting at Washington, and passed the resolutions above referred to, and proclaimed to the world that they were cut off from the Baltimore Association, and secondly, that they are the Baltimore Association. The churches reported in this strange organization have flounced, and will not stay organized, while their report has seemed to elate the New School party, and they are in hope of enjoying the entire use of the saddle. As to the appellation of Old School, poor things, we know not what use they can have for the term. should we give it to them; it would as illy fit them as the saddle, collar, &c., would the children of the free woman.

In reference to the Doctor’s remark on Warwick Association, it is altogether a mistake. That association was not drawn off from the popular institutions by a Black Rock party, in evidence of which we will give the following statements, viz; We have in our possession the original constitution of that body, and we know that there was no provision made in that document for any of the popular schemes of the day, for none of the institutions of which we complain had an existence in one of our American churches at that early date. It is true that some years subsequently to their organization they proposed to aid some of the ministering brethren of that body to devote a greater portion of their time to the work of preaching, and money was raised for that object to the amount say of $50 to $100. Soon after the purse was made up, one of the ministers of that body who, by the bye, was probably worth more money than any other in that connection, and was at the time receiving his salary of $300 per annum., took a tour into the interior of the State to visit some of his relations and friends, and to attend to his own business, and when he returned presented his bill for so many days missionary service; and in paying him for doing his own private business, we are informed that he received what funds there was on hand. The churches having thus sipped at the golden cup, instead of becoming intoxicated, were in that case permitted *to drink deadly poison and not be seriously injured;* for the small dose made them so sick that they were never afterwards guilty of a similar experiment. By reason of some popular preachers coming into some of the churches, the association was occasionally somewhat harassed with new things. She was once nearly flooded with circulars from Dr. Stoughton and others, calling them to join in the Foreign Mission enterprise; this, however, we believe, they (lid not go into any farther perhaps than to notice the project favorably. But long before the first meeting was called at the Black Rock, the subject of the new measures was attempted to be palmed on that association, and she

refused; and from year to year the struggle was renewed, until the association resolved, as a body, to have nothing to do with the new institutions, and requested the churches to write no more in their church letters on that subject; and when the New School party found there was no hope of drawing the Warwick Association from the old track, three churches of the Arminian cast withdrew, with their famous leaders, Teasdale and Jackson, and formed what they call the Sussex Association, to the great joy of those who remained, for from that time forth the Warwick Association has assumed her original dignity, and has held her annual meetings in peace and harmony.

We close by saying, that although there is too much justice in the charge which accuses the Old School Associations with having dabbled at sundry times with the new schemes of the day, yet we do heartily repent, and solemnly renounce them, and we ardently desire the New School to take back their saddle and put it on its proper animal, and never suffer it again to appear among the old fashioned Baptists. We are glad, heartily glad, truly glad, that the Doctor has discovered that we are not the beast to wear his new light saddle, the bridle or the collar.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
February 24, 1837.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 358 – 362

“BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!”

“Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” – *John the Baptist.*

WHILE in the faithful discharge of that duty to which he had been divinely called, John Baptist preached in the wilderness of Judea, and buried in the bosom of Jordan all such as gave him satisfactory evidence that they were prepared for that sacred ordinance. Jerusalem and Judea and all the regions around about Jordan came out to his baptism; and while in the act of immersing the repenting Jews, John saw Jesus approaching, and gave testimony that he was the Christ. Identifying his very person, he pointed him out amongst the multitude, on which occasion he made use of the words at the head of this article.

These words are full of meaning: not only because John saw and bore record that this was the Son of God, and thus fulfilled another grand design of his heavenly vocation; but the words employed in this case, as indicted by the Holy Ghost, uttered volumes in this short sentence, *Behold the Lamb of God that taketh. away the sins of the world.* Throughout the entire ceremonial dispensation, and from the morning of time, from the early sacrifice of Abel, lambs were made use of for sacrificial purposes, as the most significant emblem nature could supply of him that was to come. Should we contrast the offering of a lamb by Abel with the product of Cain’s system by works, that he obtained from the bowels of the earth, which was at that time groaning under the curse of God for man’s sake, we might in the understanding of this subject contemplate the riches of God’s grace, richly displayed in striking contrast with every system of religion, the existence of which was of earthly origin. The paschal lamb that was slain in Egypt preparatory to the

emancipation of God's chosen tribes, whose blood was sprinkled on the door-posts of the dwellings of the Israelites, as a peaceful sign that God's avenging wrath, that night to be poured forth upon the pride of Egypt, should pass them by, and the flesh of which was to be eaten with bitter herbs, was all designed to set forth Christ and him crucified. The thousands of unblemished lambs that by the special appointment of God himself constantly teemed upon the Hebrew altars, uttered the same sentence that we have written as the foundation of these remarks.

Another striking example we have in the case of Abraham and Isaac. "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offertory." said the patriarch to the lad; and on the mountain which God showed Abraham, this prediction was more plainly illustrated in the offering of the ram that was caught in the thicket by his horns, and the release of the entire posterity of the free woman. What ample room we find for enlargement in the contemplation of the types and predictions going before and pointing, like John, to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. But alas! -

"No blood of bird, nor blood of beast,
Nor hyssop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could take our dismal stain away.

Jesus the Lamb, his blood alone
Has power sufficient to atone;
His blood can make us white as snow;
No Jewish rite could cleanse us so."

All the vast multitude of slaughtered lambs that were ever offered, were sacrificed at the expense of those by whom they were offered; but these could not put away sin, except in a figurative or ceremonial way; but in the person of him to

whom the Baptist pointed we see the Lamb of God. “God gave his only begotten Son,” “God spared not his own Son,” and hence, from this consideration, he was emphatically the Lamb of God, and that in distinction from all that had ever been offered as typical of him. In this brief sentence, “Behold the Lamb of God,” those quickened Jews who heard John preach were called to turn away from all the previous expectations they had ever entertained of salvation by the deeds of the law; and by the same are all the redeemed of the Lord among the Gentiles now commanded away from every human device, from every earthly scheme and system ever invented by men, and look to God alone for salvation. But why behold or look to Jesus as the Lamb of God? Because he taketh away the sins of the world. The sacrifices under the law were never designed to extend to any of the Gentile nations - they were only offered for Israel; but in the Lamb we have not only a propitiation for the sins of such Jews as were ordained unto eternal life, but also for the sins of the whole world. But it may be inquired, In what sense did Christ take away the sins of the world? It is contended by Arminians and Universalists that Christ made an atonement for, or took away all the sins of all mankind. If this position be correct, then there is not at this time a sinner on earth; for if the sins of all men were taken away by the atonement of the Lamb of God, those sins which he took away could not remain as they were before he took them away, or where would be the triumph of his cross? The truth is, salvation must be as general and as universal as was the atonement; for the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. The Lamb that John bore record of *taketh away* the sins of the world. He did not open up a way whereby we might, by certain exertions, means, &c., be released from the guilt and consequences of sin, or bring the human family into a salvable state; or merely to so satisfy the law and justice as to purchase to himself the right to offer salvation conditionally to all mankind, and leave them to accept and be saved, or reject

and be damned. The Lamb of God has finished the work that the Father gave him to do. This was a definite work, and well understood by our Lord, when he said, “Lo! I come to do thy will, O God.” What the Father gave him to do was fully comprehended in the execution of the Father’s will. And it either was or was not the will of the Father that he should save all mankind from their sins; if it was, then they are safe, for as we before quoted his words, “I have finished the work thou gayest me to do;” but if it was not the will of God to save all mankind from sin, then Christ did not come to save all men; for he came to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work.

But we have dwelt thus far on the negative. The question returns, How, or in what sense, does he take away the sins of the world? We understand by the expression no more nor less than this: He had a people among the Jews, and other sheep he had also that were not of that fold; them, he said he also must bring; and where Jews and Gentiles were included they were generally called *the world.* We might give many examples from the scriptures where the terms *world* and *whole world,* &c., are used in a very limited sense; as “If we let these men (the apostles) go, the whole world will go after them, and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation.” “And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” Such passages are so common in the New Testament as to leave no room for caviling upon the subject. We are unavoidably brought to the conclusion that Christ either died for all the sins of all mankind, for part of the sins of all mankind, or for all the sins of all his people, they being but a part of the whole family of man. Now if he died for all the sins of all mankind, then all mankind will be saved, or else the death of Christ has failed to secure salvation to those for whom he died, and in that case none can be saved. To believe that all are included in the atonement of Jesus, and consequently are saved, will

directly contradict what the scriptures assert, viz: that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God;" and to believe that none will be saved is to disbelieve the oath and promise of our God, as recorded in the same sacred volume; and if to sustain any position, we are driven to the necessity of making the bible a book of contradictions, then we can no longer consider its testimony valid on any subject. Hence the position that Christ died for all the sins of all mankind is untenable.

If we take the ground that Christ died for the original sin of man, or in other words, for a part of the sins of all mankind, we are still in a wretched condition; for he that transgresseth the law in one point is guilty in all, and there would be on this ground no rational hope for the salvation of a single soul.

But on the scriptural ground that he laid down his life for his sheep, that "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from *all iniquity,* and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;" on this ground we find a solid basis for the consolation of God's children, that he has saved them, and called them, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. With this scriptural view all the types are in harmony. Abel's firstling of the flock was not offered for Cain. The passover lamb was not slain for, nor eaten by the Egyptians, nor did its blood prevent the destroying angel from executing the vengeance of God upon the first-born of the Egyptians. The ram that Abraham offered did not restore Ishmael to the family of Abraham. Not one of all the offerings that were made under the law were applicable to any other than the children of Israel. Now in all these types, an atonement exclusively for the elect of God is taught and demonstrated. Abel was a figure of God's acceptable people, and he with his offering was respected of God, while Cain and his offering were disrespected. When

Isaac was bound and laid upon the wood, and the command was given to slay him, and the dreadful knife was raised, Isaac described the state of the elect when under the sentence of God's holy law; and when he was released, and the lamb that God had provided was offered in his place, and actually bore that suffering and death to which Isaac had been doomed, Isaac was an emblem of the spiritual children of the free woman. Now we, says Paul, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise." Nothing is more clearly established than that ancient Israel was typical of the election of grace. "If ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." All the offerings therefore that were made for Israel under the ceremonial law, prefigured the offering of the Lamb of God, bearing the sins of his people in his own body, to expiate their guilt, and to bring in everlasting righteousness for them, and for them exclusively. The intercession of Christ is also founded on his atonement, and must agree in measurement therewith as exactly as did the mercy seat with the dimensions of the ark. And the intercession of Christ is on this wise. "I pray not for the world; I pray for those thou hast given me out of the world."

Another argument equally irresistible in defense of the scriptural doctrine of the definite and exclusive design, nature and application of the atonement, is founded on the pre-existing relationship of Christ and his people. The right of redemption was founded on relationship, as the husband is alone the legal representative of his wife, the father of his child, &c. The life of all the church of God was given them in Christ, (not in themselves) before the world began. That church, in all its fullness, he has ever represented, and that church he ever will represent. This union and relationship existed before all time, extends throughout all time, and extends eternally. On this part of our subject we might enlarge, but we should swell this article to too great a length.

Finally, to every poor, desponding, quickened soul we reiterate the text, Behold the Lamb of God! As all that were bitten in the wilderness, when they looked on the brazen serpent, were healed, even so shall Christ be lifted up, or rather now has been lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him may not perish, but have everlasting life. Behold the Lamb, and that in connection with his work. He taketh away the sins of the world. Poor Gentile sinner, Jesus died for his people among the Gentiles as well as among the Jews.

Again, christians, behold your Lord, your King, your Leader, the Captain of your salvation; behold him as a lamb that has been slain, has accomplished all that heaven decreed, all that the Father gave him to do; and therefore fear not the powers of hell and death; they are vanquished foes. Behold his lamb-like innocence, humility, submission and harmless deportment, and strive to imitate his divine example.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
January 15, 1841.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 651 – 657

BELSHAZZAR

“Belshazzar, the king, made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand. Belshazzar, whilst he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which his father, Nebuchadnezzar, had taken out of the Temple which was in Jerusalem, that the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, might drink therein.. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.” - Dan. v. 1-4..

We trace through the above text a striking example of the religious movements of the present day. The analogy which the above text bears to the times in which we live is truly astonishing. Belshazzar, it will be recollected, was king of the Chaldeans, and the seat of his government was Babylon, which the king had built for the house of his kingdom, by the might of his power, and the honor of his majesty.

Babylon is used in the New Testament as a figure of “the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth.” Belshazzar, the king, may represent the son of perdition. Much might be said in tracing the analogy between typical and anti-typical Babylon, but we shall confine ourself at this time to a few things expressed in the foregoing text. Belshazzar, the king, made a great feast, &c. Of what particular dainties this feast was composed, except Wine, we are not informed, only we learn by comparing the text with Dan. i. 8, that the Babylonish meats were such as the children of Israel considered unclean, and of which Daniel would not partake.

And it has come to pass in these last days that the man of sin, the son of perdition, has also made a very splendid feast, and furnished his board with all manlier of dainties of which it is unlawful for the children of God (the spiritual Israelites) to

partake; for God has charged his people by the mouth of his apostle, saying, “Touch not, taste not, handle not.” And again, “Eat not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats.” Among the dainties which crown the table of Mystery Babylon, we may name the following dishes, well suited to the taste of his popular majesty, viz: free-will, human power, vain-philosophy, human-merit, self-righteousness, worldly honor, flattering titles, such as A. M.’s, D. D.’s, Rev.’s, &c., also a large quantity of all sorts of false doctrine, together with a vast store of that intoxicating wine which has made the nations of the earth drunk from the golden cup held in the hand of the Mother of Harlots, when she was seen sitting upon a scarlet colored beast. The feast of Belshazzar was made to “a thousand of his lords,” and so is the feast of the “man of sin.” At this table of anti-christ, we see assembled all the princes and nobles of his majesty, of every rank, from the august presidents. of national societies down to the humble distributer of tracts, and the collectors of Mite Societies, Sunday School teachers, &c., with every intermediate grade. All these are feeding deliciously upon their king’s bounty, ‟ eating their own bread, and wearing their own apparel,” and as to the magnificence of this feast, it is certain that anti-christ has never spread a greater since the days when Baptist’s heads were carried in chargers, and the dignitaries of spiritual Babylon were glutted with the blood of apostles and martyrs of the Lamb.

“Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels, &c., which his father had taken from the temple at Jerusalem.” The temple at Jerusalem was in many respects a figure of the church of Christ, and the golden and silver vessels may represent the vessels belonging to the order of the gospel church. Among those which anti-christ has recently commanded to be brought over

to his service for the accommodation of himself and a thousand of his lords, we will name first, the bible.

None can dispute that this golden vessel belongs to the church of Christ. Oat of this the true Israel have been wont to drink the wine of the kingdom. Neither can it be denied that the use of this holy book, is by the speculations of the Bible Societies, and other institutions of his majesty's lords, as much profaned as were the cups, &c., which were taken from the ancient temple.

The ordinances of the gospel may also be considered as golden vessels of the Lord's spiritual sanctuary. But alas! Belshazzar has sent for them. It has become popular and fashionable to baptize the Chaldeans, and all such as say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie, and are the synagogue of Satan; and for examples that anti-christ has awfully profaned this ordinance of Christ, the reader is requested to take a peep under the floor of some, of the meeting-houses in our large cities, and they may there see the Chaldeans, who eat of all the unclean things above mentioned, immersed in those newly invented *tubs* called "Baptisteries," used, however, only by Belshazzar's host of lords, and princes, magicians, sooth-sayers, &c. Again the ministers of the word are figuratively called vessels, and anti-christ has commanded them to be brought over to Babylon for his use. This infamous king, in the arrogance of his heart, has undertaken to manufacture and then take the command of all the ministers of the Baptist name, by the powerful arm of his faithful ally, Mammon. He has succeeded to an alarming extent in taking captive many whom we once esteemed as the Lord's chosen vessels, to bear his name to the Gentiles, and has placed therein under the control of his princes and lords, the officers of Missionary Societies.

But again, we learn by the context that this great, feast was celebrated on the very eve of her destruction. front which figure we may safely infer concerning the present state of Mystery Babylon, that her destruction now of a long time lingereth not, and her damnation slumbereth not.

They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of' wood and of stone." Even so now, "the son of perdition," with all his princes, lords, wives and concubines, governors and captains, judges, treasurers, counsellors, sheriffs, and all the rulers of the provinces, at what time they hear the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, fall down and worship the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood and stone, which the king of Mystery Babylon has set up under the specious name of Benevolent Institutions. These idols they praise by ascribing to them the salvation of souls, and by saying of them, in the language of a high priest of old, "These be thy gods, which have brought thee up out of the house of bondage," &c.

But while they were in the midst of their glee in Babylon, "in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand and wrote" their dreadful doom, and the conclusion of this chapter shows that "in the same night Belshazzar the king was slain"

From which we may learn that the mystery of iniquity must rise, until it gains the climax of abomination, until she has finished the profanation of the vessels of the Lord's sanctuary, and then, even in the same night, she shall be destroyed. The dreadful sentence is already written upon her tottering walls; her magicians, astrologers, chaldeans and sooth-sayers, who are now so expert in the perversion of scripture, shall not be able to read, nor avert the dread sentence which is written, "She shall go down like the mill-stone, to rise no more at all." Then shall all those merchants

who have been trafficking with her, and bartering away the institutions of the gospel for her Babylonish merchandise, wring their hands and cry. “Alas! Babylon is fallen! that great city,”

We close these brief remarks by repeating the admonition from heaven, which John heard, saying,” Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues.” - Rev. xviii. 4. To which we add the following stanzas:

BELSHAZZAR.

BY BARRY CORWALL

Belshazzar is king! Belshazzar is lord!
And a thousand dark nobles all bend at his board;
Fruits glisten, flowers blossom, meats steam, and a flood
Of the wine that man loveth runs redder than blood.
Wild dancers are there, and a riot of mirth
And the beauty that maddeus the passions ‘of earth;
And the crowds all shout,
Till the vast roofs ring,

“All praise to Belshazzar, Belshazzar is king.”
“Bring forth,” cries the monarch, “the vessels of gold,
Which my father tore down from the temples of old.;
Bring forth, and we’ll drink while the trumpet is blown.
To the gods of bright silver, of gold, and of stone:
Bring forth!” - and before him the vessels all shine,
And he bows unto Baal, and drinks the dark wine;

Whilst the trumpets bray,
And the cymbals ring—
“Praise, praise to Belshazzar—Belshazzar the king.”

Now, what cometh - look, look, without menace or call!
Who writes with the lightning’s bright hand on the wall;
What pierceth the king like the point of a dart?
What drives the bold blood from his cheek to his heart?
“Chaldeans, magicians, the letters expound!”
They are read! and Belshazzar is dead on the ground.

Hark! the Persian is come
On a conqueror’s wing,
And a Mede’s on the throne of Belshazzar the king.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
September 25, 1833.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 109 – 114

BENEVOLENT EFFORTS.

NUMBER ONE.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him." - *Solomon.*

WE have, in a former number, noticed our intention of briefly reviewing some numbers which have recently appeared under the editorial head. of the *Cross and Journal.* In entering the lists with the writer of the numbers alluded to, we have neither time, room, nor inclination, to follow him through his labyrinth of New School logic, but simply to notice, and attempt to refute what may have been intended by the author as the bulwark of his defense.

However worthy the Bible, Tract, and Missionary Societies, and Sunday School Union, are of the character which they assume, benevolent efforts, the writer admits, must "depend upon their influence; their own works must praise them." Be it so; yet, should it appear that the influence exerted by these institutions were, to human view, productive of results in their nature beneficial to mankind, this would fall infinitely short of proving them scriptural, or acceptable to God as religious institutions. There was certainly a great show of benevolence on the part of Saul, when he spared Agag, king of the Amalekites, alive, and when he reserved the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice unto the Lord, who had made him victorious; yet for this very benevolent effort, Saul was rejected from being king over Israel. But that the institutions in question exert a benevolent influence, remains a matter of dispute, and which nothing short of divine revelation can satisfactorily and infallibly settle. On the the one hand it is urged, that, by these popular efforts, the bible is circulated, the gospel is preached, sinners are converted, churches are

raised up, ministers are multiplied and rendered efficient, saints are comforted, the heathen are christianized, the latter day glory of Zion hastened on, and, in short, some, yea many precious souls, saved from the quenchless fires of hell, where without such effort, they must suffer to all eternity. While facts on the other hand testify in a voice of thunder, that, although the copies of the scriptures are multiplied, the knowledge of bible truth is not increased; and notwithstanding the efforts of Mission Societies and their hirelings, the spread of the gospel is not facilitated,. nor the number of ministers *approved of God,* increased. Churches, not a few, are raised up by this sort of effort; but they are invariably composed of the children of the bond woman; for none but those whom the Son makes free, can be free indeed. We are well aware that mission effort-tract and Sunday School effort, as well as the more ancient horn of the same beast, infant sprinkling effort, will produce multitudes of mocking Ishmaels; but it must and will remain forever true, that "Grace and truth are," and must be brought alone "by Jesus Christ;" and "every plant that the heavenly Father bath not planted, shall be rooted up;" and all who get in the church without God's grace, shall be thrust out without his favor.

The influence of the popular institutions may be further traced by the havoc they have produced among the churches of the saints. As by taking the *back track* of a wolf we shall soon find the blood-marked spot where the brute has been killing sheep, so by a retrospect of the benevolent effort system, we find churches which once stood as the perfection of beauty, rent asunder; brethren who once took sweet counsel together, now alienated in their affections, and divided in fellowship; ministers whose voices once echoed the high praises of God, and with thrilling eloquence to the ear of every child of God, pouring forth the doctrine of sovereign, eternal, immutable, and almighty love, personal and

unconditional election, invincible and discriminating grace, in the salvation of sinners, the sovereign and infallible efficacy of the atonement of our Lord Jesus in removing all guilt from every soul for whom it was made, the effectual calling of all the election of grace by the Holy Ghost, by whom also they are quickened from the dead, washed with the washing of regeneration, and made savingly acquainted with their Lord Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; ministers whose theme was once to dwell upon the doctrine, by the influence of these institutions have departed from the faith, and are turned unto fables, (tracts) while the few yet remaining in Sardis, or on the old apostolic platform, are ridiculed, despised, persecuted, and compelled to prophesy in sacksloth. The numerous churches scattered throughout the great valley of the Mississippi, united, thriving and happy, until the rage of missionary efforts broke in upon them, now groaning under the oppressive burden of hordes of greedy wolves, let loose upon them from the Eastern priest-mills; and all this is the legitimate consequence of that *influence* called up by the editor of the *Cross and Journal,* as a test by which to determine the character of the popular institutions, for which he pleads with a zeal worthy of a better cause. Does any one inquire by what influence general atonement, offered salvation, or salvation by works, efforts, front-bench conversions, protracted, distracted and camp-meetings, with all their arminian machinery, have gained among the Baptists? The answer is at hand: all these owe their existence to the influence, called in the Ashdod tongue, *Benevolent Efforts;* and this sickly assemblage, this sable catalogue of the direct results of effort influence, is now called up by the editor of the *Cross and Journal,* to speak in praise of those efforts which gave them being. But alas! how vain the editor’s challenge! He had forgotten, or did he never know, that “There is a generation that curseth their father, and blesseth not their mother?” In vain he asks for praise.

Instead of praise, they tell of the widow and fatherless who have been visited by their horse-leach agents, and robbed of their earthly substance, under the pretense of replenishing the exhausted treasury of the Lord; and in the hollow tone of one of their commissioned gentlemen beggars, who took from a wretched and starving family in a new settlement in the interior of Pennsylvania, their last cow, and boasted on the floor of the Philadelphia Association, after committing the horrid deed, that it was the main dependence of a large and helpless family. This is no fiction. This is the result of benevolent efforts, (awful perversion of language) and for which the writer calls for praise! Does he not glory in his shame?

For want of room, we close for the present; but shall hereafter attempt a review of Mr. Stevens' decision upon the following questions, which we copy from his remarks, viz: "Have we any authority from the scriptures to do, as individual christians, or as churches, the things which are contemplated in the operations of the benevolent societies, so? In answering this inquiry, we shall draw freely upon the document contained in the "Proceedings of the General Meeting of the Western Baptists," held in Cincinnati, in the year 1833. "Is it right to circulate the bilge in the world?"

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
January 29, 1836.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 275 – 279

BENEVOLENT EFFORTS.

NUMBER TWO.

" He that is first in how own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him. " - *Solomon.*

HAVING in the preceding number bestowed some attention on the claims of the modem religious inventions to the high character and title by them assumed, we shall now attend to the questions stated, viz:

1. Have we any authority from scripture to do, as individual christians, or as churches, the things which are contemplated in the operations of the benevolent societies so called?

In answering this inquiry, our champion for new isms has proposed to draw freely from the documents of the General Meeting of Western Baptists, held in Cincinnati, in 1833. But why not draw freely from the bible? We, of the Old School, are in the habit of drawing our scriptural authority from the word of God, and not from the documents of any body of uninspired men; and why, since Mr. S. well knows the difference, does he promise scriptural authority, and then, forsooth, transcribe for us the documents of those who by this very craft have their wealth? This slip of his unruly pen cannot be attributable to ignorance; it must be attributed to convenience, or necessity, or both. We have never pretended to dispute that of this sort of testimony abundance may be brought to sustain this or any other extravagance in doctrine or in practice. How easy it is, for example, for the Protestant Pedo-Baptists to show the validity of infant or adult sprinkling, by adverting to the documents of the Pope, or the Mother of Harlots. If there is authority in the bible for these institutions, produce it; tell us the chapter and verse where

such authority is recorded; put your finger upon the passage, and that shall suffice us; but if there is no such authority in the good book, honestly confess your poverty, and let your readers know that your calling is to teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

But to the question. And what, we inquire, do these societies contemplate doing? The answer to this interrogation is given us by the New School in a language as confused as that in use among the effort-men who were engaged in the building of Babel. We are often assured that these societies contemplate the evangelization of the heathen the conversion of the world to God, sending the gospel among the destitute, multiplying and qualifying ministers of the gospel, and the performance of many other wonderful works. The question then appears to be, Is it the duty of christians, as individuals, or as churches, to convert the world, save souls from hell, or perform the works which none but God can do? But Mr. S. appears aware of the difficulty of making a fair statement of the question. No one will decide that the scriptures authorize individuals or churches to give life to the dead, hearing to the deaf, or sight to the blind; yet the performance of these works are contemplated by the institutions called benevolent. But to avoid, if possible, the light upon this subject, Mr. S. has very ingeniously stated his questions so as to have them embrace nothing objectionable, as in the following instance:

"Is it right to circulate the bible in the world?"

Let it be distinctly understood that the right of individuals or churches to circulate the scriptures in any lawful manner has never, to our knowledge, been disputed; hence the position assumed in the statement of the above question is wholly gratuitous. The question concerning which we are at issue, as far as the Bible Society is involved, is not the right to distribute the copies of the bible, but rather the right to

institute National Religious Societies, sufficiently powerful, according to their own declarations, to wield a power over the destiny of the world, without the shadow of authority in the word of God, or to call into being, under the notion of doing God service, a religious society based upon money, and giving membership, religious privileges and flattering titles indiscriminately to all who will advance the grand *sine qua non* -money - irrespective of any further qualifications; or which will amass to itself the wealth of the country by a system of popular mendicancy, under the pretense of supplying the poor and destitute with the bible gratuitously, and then sell the scriptures at an advance affording a generous profit to the establishment, which, when added to the amount received from a thousand other revenues that constantly pour their gold and silver into their coffers, not only cover the current expenses of the establishment, but enable the officers, agents and supernumeraries of the institution to live in affluence, and roll in luxury, while their surplus funds are employed in erecting stately mansions, or largely invested in bank, or other profitable stock. Now let the question, embracing its legitimate bearings, be answered, and say, Is there authority in the scriptures of truth for these things? If so, where may it be found? But if there is no such authority, do not attempt to establish positions which, if sustained, would not touch the point at which the Old and New School are at issue, and then seek to blind the eyes of the unsuspecting by words of deceit and dishonesty. Let it be forever remembered that the cause of God can be sustained without the aid of intrigue or deception.

The lengthy quotation made by Mr. S. from the documents from which he promised to draw so freely, among other things declares that *the whole body of the Jewish people were acquainted with the prophecies of the Old Testament from their youth up.* But does this fact, which we freely

admit, show the necessity of Bible Societies, in order to give a general knowledge of the bible? Were the whole body of the Jews supplied with the books of the law, the prophets and the Psalms, by Bible Societies similar to those now in being? By no means; and yet we are gravely told that they were acquainted with the scriptures from their youth. If then the method of instructing the whole body of the people of Israel in the scriptures, which the all-wise Jehovah had provided, was sufficient, what authority have any to say that the provisions he has made for the promulgation of bible knowledge, are inadequate to secure the accomplishment of the purpose of his pleasure now?

"Shall mortal worms presume to be
More holy, wise or just than he?"

But the most extraordinary language of the extract is that in which the Convention of Western Baptists aver that the *"bible is the only authority to which we have any right to appeal in matters pertaining to the religion of Christ."* So then the Convention must either conclude that their cause is not the religion of Christ, (which would be a very just conclusion,) or they have exceeded their own sense of right, in attempting to sustain, as religious institutions, the societies for which this same convention, in a report upon another subject, acknowledge they have no authority in the bible. How strangely inconsistent for them in one breath to tell us that the bible alone is the rule of their faith and practice, and deny the right of any to appeal to any other standard on religious matters, and in the next that it was never intended to embrace the entire duty of the saints, but merely the great outlines, &c. Indeed, were it not for exciting levity while dwelling upon a serious sub we would here insert the anecdote of a convention of the Dutch inhabitants of some county, who convened for the purpose of considering the propriety of building a new court-house, after considerable

discussion on the subject, passed the three following resolutions, viz:

1. Resolved to build a new court-house.

2. Resolved that the new house shall be composed of the materials of which the old house was composed.

3. Resolved that the old house stand entire until the new one is finished.

But is it less ludicrous for an assembly of professed divines to resolve unanimously that the bible is their only rule [of practice, that no one has any right to appeal to any other standard, and then resolve to patronize, as a religious institution, and an instituted means of grace and salvation, such things as they unanimously resolve they have no scriptural precept or example for?

Mr. S., after giving the lengthy paragraph from the document alluded to, sums up thus: "Now the first Baptist in the world has yet to come forward and say that it is not right to circulate the bible, at least as extensively as the preaching of the gospel." But why, we inquire, is one called from the dead to assist Mr. S. in proving a negative? Does he wish to play off upon John the Baptist the same trick which Saul and the witch of Ender did upon Samuel? For us, we see no necessity for disturbing the ashes of the slumbering dead. We would rather answer the New School as Abraham did the rich man, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rise from the dead." - Luke xiv. 31. We cannot conceive the necessity of a new revelation upon the subject; John the Baptist certainly carried nothing to his grave with him which could be of any service to the church of God; and if John should rise, he would not dare, like the New School, to add to the words of the prophecy or teaching of

God's book, "lest God should add unto him the plagues written in that book." - Rev. xxii. 18. We should hardly expect a Baptist of common modesty would insinuate, as the editor of the *Cross* has done, that the scriptures were an insufficient revelation, and that the sepulchers of past ages must be ransacked, and their dead exhumed to furnish us with a more sure word of prophecy.

But leaving Mr. S. for a moment to cut himself among the tombs, we will say on the part of the Old School brethren, with the poet:

"Let others trust what names they please,
Their saints and idols boast;
We've no such advocates as these,
Nor trust to the heavenly host."

Nor would we say in our hearts, Who shall ascend up into heaven, that is, to bring Christ, or the gospel, which is Christ, down from above, or who shall descend into the deep to bring him up from the dead? "Behold the word is nigh us, even in our heart and in our mouth, even the word of faith which we preach." - Rom. x. 7, 8. It was neither the practice of John, or of any of the primitive Baptists, to connect with the preaching of the word the distribution of copies of the scriptures, and much less to make this thing indispensable; nor did the apostles, or other primitive Baptists, complain, when going among the pagan Gentiles, of laboring under a disadvantage for the want of Bible Societies, or copies of the scriptures; but in all places where the word was preached, as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed. When they *heard* these things, (not when they had compared the testimony of the apostles with the scriptures then extant,) they believed and were baptized, &c. That it is right to publish and circulate the scriptures in any lawful manner, we do not dispute; but that it is indispensably necessary as an

auxiliary to the preaching of the gospel, and to give efficacy to it, as contemplated by the New School, we cannot admit; for if such were the case, none but such as were capable of reading the bible for themselves could be saved, and all idiots, infants, and others who are destitute of the knowledge of letters, must inevitably be lost.

In our next we design to notice the subject of Missions and Tracts, and examine the arguments, or substitutes for arguments, given in Mr. Stephens' first number on the subject.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
February 12, 1835.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 282 – 288

BENEVOLENT EFFORTS.

NUMBER THREE.

"He that is first in his own cause seemeth just; but his neighbor cometh and searcheth him." - *Solomon.*

We now come to an examination of the subject of Missions and Tracts.

"**Is it scriptural for missionaries to be sent out, and to be sustained by the churches?**"

The bare statement of the question discovers much of that cunning craftiness of men, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, and which is so very characteristic of the general course of all those who advocate the newly invented measures of the day. The writer would have the question abstractly considered, without reference to societies, modes, forms or anything else which may be involved in the consideration, and without waiting a reply, answers his interrogation in the affirmative, adding: "Because the apostles were missionaries." This assertion the writer easily proves by another copious draft upon the documents of the convention, wherein we are informed that the term missionary, from the Latin, and apostle from the Greek, are perfectly synonymous. Without disputing with our very learned antagonist upon the precise signification of terms in the Latin or Greek tongue, we will attend to the question before us. And first, It is scriptural for our Lord Jesus Christ to send out apostles; "These twelve *Jesus* (not the Mission Board) sent forth, and commanded them saying, Go not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." - Matt. x. 5, 6. Here then we have scriptural

testimony that our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Zion, did actually send forth certain apostles, or in modern language *missionaries,* with special instructions where to go, what to do, and on what to be sustained.

It evidently did not occur to our Lord at this time that a Missionary Society, made up of members who had bought their membership at a stipulated price, would be useful, either for the comfort or support of his little band of missionaries, the promotion of the glory of God, or the salvation of some millions that his Father had not given him, and which otherwise must be damned for want of missionary labor; for while ample provisions were made to secure the support of the apostles, and the accomplishment of all that he designed, independently of societies, purse, scrip, coats or staves, the organization of moneyed institutions for the support of what should be called the *gospel* was reserved, with which to fill up the measure of the iniquities of a future generation.

But taking this question, as We must, in connection with the first leading question in the investigation, viz: Have we any authority from the scriptures to do, as individuals or as churches, the things which are contemplated in the operations of the benevolent societies, so called?" We necessarily understand the writer to mean, Is it scriptural for us, as individuals, or as churches, to send forth and sustain apostles? To which inquiry we answer, No. Some of our reasons for this conclusion, we will give. First, The scriptures no where record any such authority; hence it must be unscriptural. Second, That authority is exclusively vested in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, Go ye, therefore," &c; consequently it is unscriptural for us, individually or collectively to arrogate to ourselves that prerogative. Third, Because the full number of missionaries or apostles, ordained

of God, was confined in scripture to precisely “the twelve,” and that number was chosen, ordained, called, commissioned, named and sent forth by our Lord Jesus Christ, eighteen hundred years ago; and all that have been sent forth by men as individuals, churches or societies since the apostles’ of the Lamb have fallen asleep, are in scriptural language called “false apostles.”

Will Mr. Stevens, or his convention of Western diviners say, that the seventy sent forth by our Lord, were also missionaries? Then let them, if they can, reconcile their own jargon; they tell us that the terms, apostle and missionary, signify the same thing; and if so, the seventy were not missionaries, for they were not apostles; and if they were, it would by no means help the cause of the New School, or advocates of modern missionary institutions, since they were neither called nor sustained by men as individuals nor as churches.

That God has supplied his Zion with a regular succession of gospel ministers from the days of John the Baptist unto the present, and that he will continue to supply his church with able ministers of the New Testament, until Zion’s King shall come unto her again without sin unto salvation, we do most cheerfully admit; but these are not called, qualified or *sent* by men, nor by the will of man, but of God. They are called with an holy, an irresistible calling, taught by the Holy Spirit in the old school of Christ, sustained by him who feeds the ravens, who takes care of the sparrows, and who has numbered the very hairs of their heads. When a company of this sort of Old School preachers returned from a preaching tour, where they had been *sent* by their divine Lord and Master, we hear from them no croaking and boast of how many they had converted or baptized, or how many Sabbath Schools, Mission, Tract, or Pin-cushion Societies they had organized; nor did they come back to their Master, saying,

Lord we have come well nigh starving to death, for the people would not pay us for our preaching, or that we suffered from want of a purse, scrip, staff, coat or anything else. But when the good Master demanded of them whether they had lacked anything, they answered promptly, "Nothing." Why, said they, "Lord, even the devils were subject to us through thy name." They fared much better than that greedy old missionary did, who trusted in Balak's house full of gold.

In saying that the ministers of Christ are not sustained by men, as individuals, or as churches, we would not be understood to contend that these servants of the Lord received nothing for the support of their mortal tenements from their brethren, or those among whom they labored. They did, indeed, receive an ample supply of temporal things from their brethren, but was it the contributions of their brethren and friends, that sustained them as the ministers of Christ? By no means; gold and silver, food and raiment would have been poor stuff to sustain Paul and Silas when cast into prison. We judge by their songs of praise to the God of their salvation, that to them it was given to eat of the hidden manna; they were clothed with salvation, arrayed in white robes, and sustained by the unbroken arm of the mighty-God of Jacob. We are often reminded by the New School. disciples, of Paul's *robbing* other churches, that he might do service to. the saints at Corinth. Do these lovers of filthy lucre mean to insinuate that Paul practiced such a course of roguish, deceptive and dishonest trickery, as is so common with the religious mendicants of our day, in order to enable him to preach among the Corinthians the exceeding riches of Missionary Boards? How absurd the thought! How many, we inquire, of the modern missionaries can adopt the language of Paul, and say in truth and righteousness, "I have coveted no man's gold and silver; these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." - Acts xx.

33, 4. Hereafter we intend to take a more enlarged view of the Mission and its kindred societies; but for the present we shall pass to the consideration of the subject of Tracts; and in the meantime we challenge Mr. Stevens to produce his "*Thus saith the Lord,*" which he tells us he has, authorizing the christians of America to support an *Apostle* in Burmah, and especially an Arminian sent by a board of Presidents, Directors & Co.

The next thing to be considered, agreeably to the arrangement laid down in the *Cross and Journal, is* the religious instruction of the young, or Sabbath Schools. We would notice the arguments in favor of Mr. Stevens' position, but for this good reason, we find no arguments used in their defense, or anything which appears to demand from us any special attention.

The Tract question is thus stated, viz: "Is it right, or does it come within the duty of a christian, derivable from. the moral precepts of the word, to publish a religious tract?"

For the purpose of reducing the subject to the capacity of those of us who have not been brought up exactly at the feet of Gamaliel, Mr. S. has favored us with an explanation of the term *tract,* which he tells us will apply to the Minutes, Circulars, &c., of Associations, and consequently Associations are Tract Societies. As to the meaning of the term *tract,* we will not dispute the explanation given, as this can, have no direct bearing upon the subject on which we are at issue; the question being, Is it the duty, derivable from the moral precepts of the word, &c., to publish tracts? and not what does, or does not constitute a tract. The right of any individual or association to publish what they please in a tract, or any other form upon their own responsibility, and sell or give the same away, has never been disputed by the Old School Baptists. We rejoice in the freedom of the

American press; hence, Mr. S., either through ignorance or design has attempted to give a very wrong impression, as though the Old School Baptists were so strangely inconsistent as to deny to others that use of the press which we claim for ourselves as a right, or that we only objected to the tract form in which their publications were issued. Our objections to the American, and the Baptist General Tract Societies have often been clearly stated:

1. Because they are both national institutions.

2. They are both calculated to unite the church and world in an unscriptural amalgamation, which would involve both in serious difficulties.

3. Because these institutions both claim to be *religious,* and profess to be an instituted means of salvation.

4. Because they interfere with the independent government of the church; and instances, not a few, can be given, where church members have been expelled from church fellowship, for refusing to support these and similar institutions.

5. Because the publications of both institutions, as far as we have had an opportunity to examine them, teach doctrines subversive of the faith of the bible.

6. Because they give flattering titles to men, and hold mens' persons in admiration because of advantage, and do sell titles of flattery and worldly honor for money.

7. Because for the support of these humanly invented institutions, the most dishonorable and dishonest trickery and mendicancy is resorted to, and without which they cannot be sustained.

To the above, we might, were it necessary, add many other objections. But to the question: Is it the duty of a christian, derivable from the moral precepts of the word, to publish tracts? We answer, It is not. Our reasons for this decision are as follows:

1st. Allowing nothing objectionable to attend the, publication of tracts, and supposing them entirely free from the difficulties enumerated above, we should be compelled to make the same decision; because there is nothing stated in the moral precepts of the word commanding christians to publish tracts. To constitute even the publication of truth, a duty obligatory upon christians, would require a command from the Lord. The Lord has given no such command. If, in the absence of a special command, the duty was binding upon christians to publish religious tracts, then the apostles and primitive saints fell infinitely short of the performance of their duty, for neither the former nor the latter published religious tracts, unless our opponents will argue that the scriptures themselves were tracts; and if so, when they shall be able by infallible testimony to show that they are as well qualified by the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and that they have the same divine authority, which the inspired writer had, then, and not till then shall we, as bible Baptists, admit that the publication of *tracts,* either good or bad, is a duty binding upon christians, derivable from the moral, positive, ceremonial, or any other precepts of the Word of God.

2d. The publications of Old School Associations - Minutes, Circulars, Corresponding Letters, &c., are not published upon any such ground. We wish it distinctly understood that the printing of the Minutes and other documents of the proceedings of our Associations, and other meetings of Old School Baptists, is merely for the accommodation of the parties concerned in such meetings, at their own expense;

and are not viewed as moral duties, derived from the precepts of the word of God. Hence in all such meetings we feel perfectly' free to publish, at our own expense, and upon our own responsibility, such documents, or forbear to publish, and yet violate no moral precept of the word.

3d. Our third reason for deciding that the moral precepts of the bible do not make it the duty of christians to publish Tracts, we will give in a quotation from the very documents of the Western Baptist Convention, from which, as his oracle, Mr. Stevens promised to draw so freely and in which the reader will find it expressly stated by the New School themselves, that they are without bible authority for *the innumerable and diversified details of their benevolent action.* Consequently, by their own showing, the duty to publish Tracts is not derivable from the precepts of the word of God. We purpose giving in our next an extract from their proceedings.

Having thus briefly reviewed the numbers published by Mr. Stevens, we arrive at the final conclusion, that we have no authority from scripture, as individuals, churches, associations or societies, to do the things which are contemplated in the operation of the Benevolent Societies, (so called.) We have not followed Mr. S. through his four numbers; but we believe have noticed all that can have any bearing upon the subject on which we are at issue. We now leave the subject for the present, and at the same time admonish our brethren who fear the Lord and tremble at his word, to search the scriptures for themselves. It is not true that we have entered upon a new dispensation, the *exigencies* of which requiring such duties as were not binding upon the primitive disciples of the Lamb; therefore let the important words of our Lord, with which divine revelation closes, never be forgotten: "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this

book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith surely I come quickly, Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” - Rev. xxii. 18 - 20.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
February 26, 1836.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 288 – 295

BEST EVIDENCE OF A CALL TO PREACH.

"The best evidence that a man is sent of God, to preach, is that he can preach; but these cannot preach. Did God send them? Never!"

THE above extract is copied from the *Cross and Journal,* of Ohio, and in by that paper credited to another paper called *The Baptist.* After diverting themselves with a ridiculous account of the call of the pastor of a certain *anti*-church in the Mississippi Association, (which, by the by, we believe to be a, base fabrication,) they give utterance to the words at the head of this article.

Let us examine this declaration of the New School a moment. And is it true that the best evidence that a man is sent of God to preach, in their estimation, is that he can preach? Let their established practice answer the question. Pious young men, as they call them, are selected from their assemblies, and from their churches, receive a certificate that they are fully convinced that these young lads are called of God to preach, but being illiterate and poor, they are commended to the attention of the House of Lords, who preside over the concerns of Theological Seminaries, as suitable objects for their patronage. Anon, money begging agents are sent out from Dan to Beersheba, to collect the funds to pay for qualifying these promising young men to preach the gospel. A course of from three to seven years study in such a school is deemed, by the New School, highly necessary, if not indispensable to qualify them for the work; and yet Dr. Kendrick (boss of the theological factory at Hamilton, N. Y.,) declared to the editor of this paper, that they received none, as beneficiaries into their theological school, but those who

gave them undoubted evidence that they were called of God to the work.

In defending the divinity of theological colleges, a Mr. Fisk told us, a few years ago, that when he received his call to preach, he could not preach - he attempted, but failed; he was still panting for the work, and was induced by the advice of friends to go to Hamilton Seminary; he accordingly packed up all his worldly estate and carried it on his back, three hundred miles, on foot, to the school of the prophets; (or rather profits,) and to that institution he confessed himself indebted for his preaching talents. Poor soul, he could neither preach before or since his three years apprenticeship at the business.

Who does not know that the college bred preachers, will show the greatest proportion of fops and fools, of any class of our citizens? Dr. Ely stated in his paper some four or five years ago, that one of these manufactured clergymen, at the West, was so excessively stupid, that when he had mounted his horse, he tried in vain to make the poor animal go, until the good woman at the house informed him that it would be necessary to unhitch the poor brute. But the Doctor added, (and very justly, we presume,) that they had many others among them who sometimes mounted horses which did not belong to them.

No, Mr. Stevens. We have nothing to fear from a comparison of the Old and New School preachers, as to character, or preaching talents. In literature and numbers you excel us; but the most illiterate of our old fashioned preachers, will preach more of the gospel of Christ in one sentence, than your ablest divines will ever understand, until they become subjects of grace.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
October 5, l838.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 431 – 432

BEST WAY TO INDUCE LIBERALITY TO THE PASTORS.

BROTHER PAYTON of Indiana requested our opinion on the above subject, as will be seen by reference to his letter in our last number, page 158. Our reply was necessarily deferred until now, for want of room in the last number.

We conclude the scriptural way to discharge this, and every religious duty, is the *best way.* All our religious duties are pointed out in the New Testament, with the rule to be observed in the performance of the same, with as many of the whys and wherefores as are necessary for us to know. In that blessed volume the man of God is thoroughly furnished to all good works. - 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. If we are unable to determine the connection of the rule laid down with the duty before us, we are instructed to ask counsel of God, who giveth freely unto all men, and upbraideth not. We are not at liberty to tax our wits with the invention of ways and means, for upon that rock all the New School have split. It has been thought by some of them, that a direct tax upon the members, of ten dollars on every thousand they may possess, is the *best way* to bring them into the traces. Others have formed their congregations into societies, for the express object of making them contribute to the support of their preachers; and as an inducement, allow them the privilege of voting at the election of a pastor. This they consider the *best way.* While others think it still preferable to sell or rent the pews in their meeting-houses; each thinking their respective way the best, without the least reference to any rule that God has given.

As our individual opinion is required on this subject, we freely give it. From all the light we have, either from the word or from personal observation, we judge the *best way* for a

preacher to manage with his brethren, when he finds them disposed to neglect his temporal wants, is to feed them well; for when they are well fed, they will feel better able to be liberal. If the preacher frets, scolds, and finds fault, they will in return feel unwilling to pay him for growling and snarling; as all the time he spends in dunning and urging the flock to pay him for his services, the sheep will be on short allowance of gospel food; but let them be well fed on the sincere milk of the word, and they will grow and thrive; and instead of feeling so lean, and poor, and parsimonious., they will feel their hearts expanding with gratitude, to God, for all his benefits; and as they bask upon the marrow and fatness of the gospel, they will remember the wants of their pastor, and of their poor brethren, for whom God has made it their duty and privilege (so far as he has blessed them with the means) to provide.

If the brother or brethren are aggrieved with the backwardness of others in the church, who having the ability, do not come cheerfully up to the work, they should labor with them in the same manner they would if aggrieved on account of any other offenses.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
November 1, 1841.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 726 – 727

BEWARE OF DOGS!

So said the apostle Paul, and so says our brother of Bradford Co., Pa., whose communication will be found on the 125th page, in this number; but while it is very imprudent for children to leave the plain, straightforward path, to meddle with the ears of such surly curs as may be at strife among themselves, it is equally important that they should not be driven from a correct course by their growling or harking. When we see dogs fighting among themselves it is certainly the safer course to let them alone, but if we see a large number of them joining together to kill sheep, a trick which they have sometimes been guilty of, or when we find them in mischief which threatens to jeopardize the lives or property of ourselves or neighbors, it may be necessary to turn some what aside from the strict rules of neutrality, even at the imminent hazard of being thought officious, or ridiculed as being in an awkward plight. It may, perhaps, be difficult always to know exactly when, and where, and how, to meddle with strife, without disregarding the apostle's admonition or the instruction of the proverb. The wise man, however, has drawn the line thus, "strife belonging not to him." There is certainly a great deal of strife and contention at times among the potsherds of the earth, which does not immediately concern the children of God, and therefore does not belong to them. Such examples might be given as when J. M. Peck and W. C. Buck quarrel through their respective papers about the superior claims of their New School hymn books, or the strife between the eastern and western New School Baptists concerning the comparative merits of their mission plans, their talents, respectability, &c. In all these matters it would be downright folly for the Old School Baptists to interfere; for their strife in no manner concerns or belongs to us. But when we see a number of the most popular, wealthy, and influential sects of the anti-christian

interests, leading together for the express purpose of destroying the civil, social, and religious liberties of our country, and so augmenting their power as to put the civil and military forces of our country at defiance; and when we know that but for these restraints they would long since have driven us from the land for which our fathers fought, and from those sacred rights for which they bled, may we not expose their anti-christian spirit without justly incurring the censure of meddling with strife belonging not to us? Is our Bradford County brother weak and blundering enough to suppose that when the allied powers, which have united together, and called to their aid the mob, who have already lit up the fires of persecution in our land of boasted civil and religious liberty, shall have exterminated the Catholics, and butchered the residue of the Mormons, that they will spare the Old School Baptists? Whether he entertains any such thoughts or not, he must excuse us for so far yielding to the strong convictions of our judgment as to raise the note of warning, that our brethren may judge for themselves the cause of alarm, and prepare for the battle; that they may stand "every man with his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night." Although the dogs with which we have to do, may, when the balance of numbers and of power has been against them, have displayed the qualities of the fawning or of the sleepy dogs, let the balance of power preponderate in their favor, and they will be found real bloodhounds; for they are greedy dogs which can never have enough.

Dogs which are in the habit of killing sheep are the most cunning dogs in the world; they will congregate together in the night when their masters are asleep, and when they have finished their depredations they will wash off every trace of blood and be back to their places long before he day dawns, and put on the airs of the most harmless innocence; you

must catch them in the very act or you would be tempted to believe it impossible they were guilty.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
August 15, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 482 – 484

“BE YE SEPARATE.”

CAN we consistently hold with the hart and run with the hound? Is it consistent for the Old School Baptists to take their stand against the corrupting abominations of the present times, and at the expense of our names and reputation, subject ourselves to the jeers, ridicule and calumny of the popular zealots of our day, and then so far countenance them in their iniquitous career as to invite their ministers to preach among us? Hark! the word of God replies: “Mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them, for they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good works and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.” - Rom. xvi. 16, 17.

Brethren, in obedience to the divine command, certain characters are to be *marked* and *avoided.* Who are they? Not such as separate themselves from those who walk disorderly, for all the saints are expressly commanded so to do. But our text is sufficiently explicit; mark such as cause divisions, *contrary* to the doctrine taught the saints previously to Paul’s writing his epistle to the church at Rome. It is a well known truth that the only divisions which now agitate the church of God are such as have been made by the introduction of what are falsely denominated benevolent institutions; such as had neither been learned or even heard of, when our apostle wrote; and yet, how strange to tell! many there are who think it very hard and uncharitable to obey the divine command of God concerning those who are constantly making divisions among us by setting up these abominations in Israel.

Others there are who, notwithstanding their conviction that these are the men alluded to by the apostle, and these the

men and things to be avoided by the household of filth, tell us that they wish to act charitably towards these, their erring brethren; and if they will come among us as preachers and agree to say nothing about, schemes and inventions, they can receive them, notwithstanding they know them to be the advocates of the new divinity of the age elsewhere; and so by their course acknowledge them as the messengers of our Lord Jesus Christ, and aid them essentially to, by good words and fair speeches, deceive such of the simple as are looking to such inconsistent Old School Baptists for an example.

Brethren, we are either bound to reject these men, or we are not. If we are not, why do we pretend to make any stand at all? But if we are, let us lay aside all our own nice fleshly, worldly and (falsely called) charitable feelings, which war against the spirit on this point, and buckle on our armor, and dispute every inch of the ground with the common enemy.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
March 4, 1835.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 212 – 214

BIBLE DEFINITION OF “GOSPEL”

Like so many Bible terms, the word GOSPEL has been given various definitions contrary to its original and proper meaning.

The word has its origin "in Christ before the foundation of the world." This was contained in the "promise" God made before the foundation of the world. (Tit. 1:2) The "gospel," the "good news" or "good tidings" is the declared fulfillment of that promise.

In Isaiah 61:1-3 is found the outstanding proclamation made by the Sum and Substance of the good tidings, -- Jesus Christ Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the meek, He has sent Me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all that mourn. To appoint to them that mourn in Zion, to give to them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." The Redeemer repeated this same proclamation of Himself in the synagogue.

While this prophetical statement is often quoted, its full significance is rarely understood. In this one sweeping declaration, there is encouched - not the beginning of the gospel, not a part of its fulfillment, - the grand total of what the Son of Man declared on the cross: "IT IS FINISHED"!

The Greek word "evanggelion" is translated "gospel" in the King James Version. This word, together with its rendering of

"good tidings," glad tidings" and "preach the gospel" occurs some one hundred and eight times in the New Testament, none of which intimate anything less than "finished redemption" in Christ.

In no instance does the word convey any thought of a mere "free-offer of grace."

When Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink," He no more invited the thirsty, than He invited the light when He said, Let there be light. In the first place there is not a soul on the earth that does or can thirst for the living waters which flow from Him, until He quickens it, and makes it thirst, and when made to feel its thirst, and even when the tongue faileth for thirst , it can no more approach the living fountain than it can make a world, until Jesus applies, not the invitation, but the word, "Come unto Me." His words are spirit and they are life; and His sheep hear them, and they know His voice, and they follow Him; because they have no power or even disposition to resist their Shepherd's voice. The calling of the saints is nowhere in the scriptures denominated an invitation. He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. If he only invited them they would have to get out themselves, or stay behind. But when he calls, the dead hear His voice, (not His invitation,) and they that hear shall live. How would it suit the condition of a poor, lost, helpless soul, one that feels his poverty, inability and impotence, to read the word thus: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall be invited to live, and they who accept the invitation shall live. And when He inviteth forth His own sheep He goeth before them, provided they accept the invitation. It is perfectly in keeping with every feature of Arminianism for workmongers to talk of invitation of the gospel, because the very term implies the willing and the doing power to be in the creature. But it is neither in harmony with the doctrine of experience of the

saints of God to so speak of His communications to them as to imply that He has yielded up the government to them; that He has hinged the effect and result of His communications on their will instead of His own will. It is derogatory to His character, it reflects on His wisdom, power, and grace.

Gilbert Beebe, July 15, 1846

THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"The last *Signs of the Times,* in speaking of the recent troubles in Philadelphia with the Catholics, takes sides with them. Is it not astonishing to see persons calling themselves Baptists, advocating the claims of the man of sin and warring against freedom? Strange things are continually occurring. The Old School Baptists, seeing the influence which Bible instruction exerts upon the minds of the rising generation, and fearing total extinction should the human mind continue to expand with Bible culture, may well seek the aid of popery to exclude the heavenly Volume from schools, thereby forcing a necessity for explanation of the Scriptures from the acknowledged ignorance with which the Old School pulpit is filled." - *Banner and Pioneer.*

There is little of candor and truth to be looked for from such papers as the *Banner and Pioneer, nor do we consider* their falsehood and slander against us of sufficient importance to merit a serious reply. But as the Old School Baptists in general are attacked, and the attack made upon the responsibility, not of the *Banner* only, but in behalf of the combined powers of the *American Protestant* and the *Native American* organizations, we are called on to examine the several charges made and implied. They are as follows, viz.:

1. Of speaking of the recent troubles in Philadelphia.
2. Taking sides with Catholics.
3. Calling ourselves Baptists.
4. Advocating the claims of the man
5. Warring against freedom.
6. Producing the occurrence of strange things.
7. Of fearing extinction from the expansion of the human mind through Bible culture.

8. Of seeking the aid of popery to exclude the heavenly volume from schools.
9. Of forcing a necessity of explanation of the Scriptures from acknowledged ignorance.
10. Of acknowledging that Old School pulpits are filled with ignorance.

These are grave charges, and they shall have a fair and candid examination in the order in which they are stated.

First. *Of speaking of recent troubles in Philadelphia.* It is true we have spoken of the incendiary movements of (Arminian and evangelical new schoolers) the popular clergy, in concert with the Native American party in Philadelphia, as "striking at the root of civil and religious liberty, and threatening our nation with all the horrors of speedy persecution, misery, and blood." That our apprehensions were well founded, subsequent events in Philadelphia have given fearful demonstration. The article in which we spoke of the troubles in Philadelphia, will be found in the 8th number of this volume, page 63, dated April 15, about four weeks before the occurrence of the riots, in which the pions clerical wire-pullers enjoyed a feast of blood and desolation, for the procuring of which they had taken the most unwearied pains. To determine understandingly of the amount of our offense in speaking of the inevitable consequences involved in the proceedings of the clergy and their companions, a few preliminary facts should be stated. It may not be generally known that a society has been organized in Philadelphia for some time, professing to be a Protestant association, composed of leading clergymen and laity of several popular workmongrel sects in that city. The professed object of this organization is, the suppression of Roman Catholicism. At the

time this organization came into existence, the Catholics were peaceably enjoying the rights which the Constitutions of our states, severally and jointly, have solemnly guaranteed them and all other sects. The very organization of such an association under such circumstances, at such a time, and for such avowed purposes, shows the origin of that sectarian intolerance which occasioned the troubles of which we spoke, wrote, and published, for which we are now accused, and the counterpart of which presents a burning city and streets flowing with human gore.

That the Protestant party were aggressors in the disgraceful scenes, is very apparent from the fact that we warned them solemnly of the consequences of their proceedings from four to eight weeks before the volcano broke forth with such fearful violence in the city of *brotherly love.* And that the rebuke contained in the above article was hurled at us, for attempting to warn our readers of the subterraneous fires which were ready to develop such frightful consequences. But scarcely had we incurred the resentment of that party and drawn forth their bitter invectives, when our prediction was realized; Philadelphia was in flames, and the blood of her slaughtered citizens was streaming down her streets!

For some eight or ten weeks before the riots, attempts were made to force upon *the public schools* of Philadelphia, by coercive measures, the reading of the *Bible, and other religious services,* for the evident purpose of provoking a war with the Catholics, or expelling their children from those public schools, *for the support of which Catholics as well as others were taxed.* To carry out their designs, and court the scene of blood which followed, the clergy of the city commenced the manufacturing of public opinion, by collecting large masses of uninformed people into public squares, and delivering incendiary speeches against the "infidelity" of such as were opposed to their proscriptive

views, and at which the clergy led on the mob by intemperate, inflammatory declamation, representing to them that the pope of Rome had sent a bulletin to this country forbidding our children the use of the Scriptures, than which a more barefaced misrepresentation could not be uttered. While the New School clergy, and New School Baptists among the rest were thus piously laboring to oppress the Papists, and to overturn the liberal institutions of our country, the mercenary press of the city, including the political as well as the religious, were teeming with the most bitter invectives against the Catholics, and the most enthusiastic applause manifested by the fanatics. Little, however, could be done, even in this way, to provoke the resentment of the Catholic party, until many meetings were held, many inflammatory speeches were delivered, many falsehoods fabricated and uttered, and many excited young men and boys wrought to such ungoverned frenzy as to qualify them for whatever their pious leaders might direct. Thus stood the case, when having failed to provoke the Catholics to acts of serious violence, they adjourned their meeting to a neighborhood occupied almost entirely of Catholics, and marched down upon them with banners streaming with such pious and benevolent inscriptions as: "Down with the Catholics;" "Down with the Irish Papists," &c. This last maneuver produced the desired effect. With this explanation, we submit the first charge for the decision of our readers whether we were justifiable in speaking of the troubles of Philadelphia?

Second. *Taking sides with the Catholics.* The position occupied by us in all that we have said or done has been uniformly to insist upon "equal and exact justice to all men without distinction of politics or religion;" a faithful adherence to the principles of the Constitution, and a sacred regard for the rights of all men, and a total and perpetual *severance of church and state.* Occupying this ground we have spoken out

upon the subject involved, and we have said, and now repeat, that the Protestants have no right, either civil or divine, to oppress the Catholics; that they are no more justifiable in persecuting the Catholics than the latter would be in persecuting them. The same spirit which the Catholics have in past ages evinced in persecuting and putting to death such as they adjudged heretics, and which modern Protestants profess to repudiate, is the very same spirit which, in turn, now rankles in the veins of those who push on the war against Catholics. What the Papists have been in other times, or what they now are in other nations, is not the subject or present discussion; we have simply to do with them in the position they have occupied in the late scenes at Philadelphia. In regard to the faith, order, practice, &c., of the Roman Catholics, we do not know of a single point in which we can possibly agree with them; but, as citizens of America, contending for equal rights, and especially for the right to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience, without proscription or coercive restraint, we occupy common ground with them, and with the oppressed and proscribed of every religious distinction. For the establishment of the side which we occupy, the patriots of the American Revolution faced the thundering cannon; to secure for us this boon, they poured out their blood like water; to transmit this invaluable inheritance to posterity, they pledged their lives, their property, and their sacred honor; and as evidence of their sincerity, their bones are scattered upon the broad surface of our land, and now lay bleaching before our eyes upon ten thousand fields.

As citizens, the Old School Baptists are on the side of the Constitution of our government, and fearless advocates of equal rights. As christians, we disclaim all connection with that kind of religion which depends on *Legislative enactments,* human power, the *public purse,* lawless mobs, or hireling priests, for its propagation or support. We profess,

as Old School Baptists, allegiance to that *King whose kingdom is not of this world,* whose word is our law in all religious matters, and whose name is our defense.

Third. *We are called Baptists.* A name which was once better understood than at present, once applied exclusively to the followers of the Lamb of God, but now prostituted in many instances, as a cognomen to conceal the murderous spirit of those who "have gone in the way of Cain, ran greedily after the error of Balaam, and perished in the gainsaying of Core." (Jude 11) The first man that ever bore the Baptist name was beheaded by the decree of Herod, and from the day he suffered, to the present, the history of the people to whom that name legitimately belongs, may be traced in characters of blood. The very doctrine for which we are now stigmatized by the New School, is identically the same that was held by John, by all the primitive church, and by a regular succession of Baptists from the days of John to the present. For the defense of Baptist doctrine John was beheaded, [he condemned Herod for taking his brother's wife and marrying her - a thing condemned by all true Baptists in all ages. - Ed.] Christ was crucified, and the apostles suffered martyrdom; for this doctrine Roger Williams was banished from Massachusetts, and found an asylum (haven) among the savage tribes of Rhode Island, and there planted the first standard of real independence that ever waved over the American soil. Like John the Baptist, and like all other real Baptists, we both labor and suffer reproach because we trust in the living God. We hold the same doctrine and yet maintain the same order, practice the same ordinance, and suffer the same reproach, and, if the conductor of the *Banner and Pioneer* can show any just cause why we should not be designated by the same name, we will cheerfully relinquish it.

Fourth. *Advocating the claims of the man of sin.* This charge we hesitate not to pronounce utterly false; for, we as a people, and ourself as editor and publisher of this paper, have uniformly, uncompromisingly, and emphatically, disallowed all the claims of the man of sin. When the man of sin first presented his arrogant claims upon us, to fall in love with the new order of things, we resolutely withstood him to his face. When he attempted to palm upon us the gospel of Andrew Fuller, we contested every inch of ground with him and drove him from the field. When he claimed the right to qualify pious young men to minister to us, and our money to support their colleges for that purpose, we disputed the claim. And when they called on us to aid in forming and supporting missionary establishments, tract societies, Bible societies, Sunday Schools, and many other things of the kind, we refused to allow any such claims, until he should present us with an order from our blessed Sovereign. And even now that the man of sin claims our cooperation in the work of breaking down the republican institutions of our country, in making church property of our public schools, proscribing and persecuting that portion of our fellow-citizens who differ with us in religious matters, we still disavow his right, and still we hold "one Lord, one Faith, and one Baptism." Even the claim of the man of sin, that we should be silent, and cease to expose his heads and horns, the mark in the hand and mark in the forehead, the deception of his signs and lying wonders, his image and the number of his name, we treat him as we have always been wont to do, with the same decided coolness and determined opposition. If, by the man of sin, the writer in the Banner intends to identify the Catholics *exclusively,*(although we cannot see any ground upon which it can more appropriately be applied to them than to some others,) we demand, what are their claims? Have we, has the *Signs of the Times* advocated the supremacy of the pope? No! Have we embraced any one sentiment of doctrine or practice peculiar to that

denomination? Certainly we have not. Upon what, then, does the *Banner* predicate this charge against us? Let him explain. We have contended, and we still do contend, that the Catholics as citizens of the United States, have rights, civil and religious, in common with Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Mormons, Unitarians, Universalists, and all other men; that no one order of religionists has a right to oppress, persecute, proscribe, or, in any way, infringe upon the rights of others. If this be advocating the claims of the man of sin, none but tories are exempt from the imputation.

Fifth. *Warring against freedom!* Dear reader, don't laugh. The subject is a grave one. The term freedom, in this case, is not, probably, to be understood according to the common acceptation of the word; by it, the accuser evidently means freedom to persecute and proscribe, and freedom for the one or more *class or classes of religionists to monopolize all our public schools, for the propagation of THEIR sectarian doctrines.* With that description of freedom, (a base perversion of the word,) we are uncompromisingly at war! The kind of freedom contended for by our opponents, as illustrated in the Philadelphia troubles, is simply this: All the inhabitants of that city are *taxed, according to their property, to support common schools for the education of the common people. Catholics, Protestants, and non-professors of religion, are interested alike in these schools.* Now the freedom demand by the proscriptive party, is that *they may introduce sectarian religious instruction into these common schools, and that those who dissent from such* sectarian views, shall be compelled to stifle their conscientious scruples, and passively *submit to have their children taught a system of religion in which they have no faith, and which is repugnant to their views, or sacrifice their rights in the schools, and suffer their money to go to support a kind of religion in which they have no more faith than they have in pagan mythology.* This is the freedom which was sought by the

clergy of Philadelphia, and when the board of directors of one district in that city refused to palm this abuse upon the schools under their charge, the hue and cry was raised by the enraged clergy, and the mob was called out, the people inflamed, and, finally the city set on fire, and many citizens murdered for daring to dissent from this description of freedom. Freedom to enforce religious creeds at the point of the bayonet, to enforce their religion by such powerful arguments as were used during the memorable three days riot, in which two Catholic chapels and one Catholic seminary, with one or two hundred Catholic dwelling houses, stores, &c, were laid in ashes, and many human sacrifices were offered to the idol of sectarian bigotry and religious intolerance.

If to enter our protest then against the dishonesty and wickedness of robbing Catholics of their money by taxation, to support Protestant sectarian schools, and compelling them to submit to the injustice by force of arms, be at war against freedom; if to contend for equal and exact justice to all men without distinction of politics or religion; if to raise our voice and ply our pen in defence of the Constitution of our common country, and the constitutional rights, both civil and religious, of all classes of our citizens, whether born upon our shores or adopted constitutionally as citizens, be at war against freedom, then there may be some justice in the charge; but if, according to the common acceptation of terms, the writer would charge us of wishing to curtail or infringe the constitutional rights of any man, or set of men in the United States, then the charge is a base falsehood.

Sixth. *"Strange things are continually occurring.* It is rather strange that the children of anti-christ, the Arminian daughters of the old mother of harlots, should engender such violent feelings of hostility against their mother, when there is not a thing which they charge her with, but what they are themselves also guilty of.

Seventh. *Fearing extinction through the expansion of the human mind through Bible culture.* The editor of the *Banner* betrays a stupid ignorance of the Old School Baptists, or unblushing effrontery in asserting that they fear utter extinction from any cause, much less from the effect which Bible culture is likely to have in the expanding of the human mind! From no cause do the Old School Baptists fear extinction; the thing they know is utterly impossible. If all the wrath and lightning of wicked men and devils could annihilate them, they would have been extinct long ago! The God of Jeshurun is the Rock of their defense. He rideth upon the heavens in their help and in His excellency on the sky. The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them are His everlasting arms. Of them it is written, "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." Had this New School editor said that himself and brethren had hoped through their wicked perversion of the use of the Bible, to procure the utter extinction of the Old School Baptists, he would have spoken truly, for they have given the most abundant demonstration of that fact; but their hopes shall perish, for the mouth of the Lord has so pronounced upon them. But while we have nothing to fear in regard to extinction, we have just cause to look for oppression, persecution, and violence from the entire anti-christian interests under the whole heaven. "For, therefore, we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God." Yet are we "In nothing terrified by our adversaries; which to them is an evident token of perdition, but, to us, of salvation, and that of God. For unto us it is given, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

Before we pass this item of New School raillery, let us examine the composition of this terrible image, which

the *Banner*man thinks has frightened the Old School Baptists so excessively, to wit: The expansion of the human mind *through Bible culture.*

By *Bible culture* we presume the writer would have us understand that kind of religious *drilling of the carnal mind* of man, instead of humbling the soul before God, as the work of the Holy Spirit invariably does, where souls are taught *of God;* will inflate with pride, arrogance, self-conceit, and vain boasting, in which religion is regarded as a *mere science,* which may be *taught* in our common schools, as easily as the rules of arithmetic or of the English grammar. This is what they call *Bible culture,* because they make use of the Bible as a *mere text book,* and put such *carnal construction* upon the Scriptures as contradict all that they declare. A Bible culture, in their use of words, consist in training up the children of our land, by means of Sunday and other sectarian schools, to receive *their peculiar views of doctrine.* The hypocrisy of their theory will appear, when we compare it with what the Bible plainly declares: "The words which I speak," says Jesus, "are spirit and *life;*" and His inspired apostle has informed us that the "*natural mind receiveth not* the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are *spiritually discerned.*" God has *hidden* these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; "for it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" "Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, neither have entered *into the heart of man,* the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit, for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even

so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God?" Now, if it be admitted, 1st, that the Bible contains the words which God has spoken; 2d, that His words are spirit and life; 3d, that the natural man or human mind cannot receive the things of the Spirit; 4th, that they can only be known by special revelation of the Spirit to regenerated or spiritual people; how is it possible that *flesh and blood can communicate spiritual instruction to the human* or natural mind? It is preposterous, wicked, and blasphemous to utter such abominable things.

If it were possible to instruct the natural mind of man in the things of the kingdom of God, and by a *course of scholastic drilling* to make them understand the things of which the Scriptures testify, these Arminian pedagogues would be very far from wishing to force the Bible into schools, lest the *fallacy of their own creeds should be exposed;* but knowing as they do that a mere *theory of scholastic divinity,* or as they call it, of "Bible culture," will make as many Catholics as Protestants, as many believers in deism, unitarianism, universalism, and many other isms, as it will of what they deem "orthodox" disciples, they are willing to use the Bible, as their father the devil has often done, to give currency to their abominable speculations. To prove beyond successful contradiction that there is no sincerity in their pretended veneration of the Bible, we challenge the whole brood of them to point out one single sentiment contained in the Bible which they do not deny; or one religious sentiment which they hold that is authorized by the word of God. A frightful example of this kind of "Bible culture" was witnessed in the expanding inflations of the human mind, in the late riots in Philadelphia, when the Protestant actors appeared in the streets with weapons of death in their hands, and loud professions of sacred regard for the Bible in their mouths, dashing furiously through the streets, and spreading carnage, distress and conflagration through the city; driving

defenseless mothers and helpless children from their quiet homes, to wander off in the neighboring woods to evade the cruel vengeance of these professedly "Bible cultured" ruffins. Yes, without regard to sex, age or condition, the hoary-headed with the sleeping infant, were driven from their homes, and their houses burned, and in some instances husbands and fathers butchered in the presence of their weeping and agonizing wives and wretched children.

While we disavow all fear of extinction, or that one of Zion's cords will ever be broken, or that one of her stakes will ever be removed, we confess that we have just grounds to fear that the cherished institutions of civil and religious liberty are soon to be destroyed; that scenes of bloodshed, unparalleled in the history of mankind [civil war], may justly be looked for. This kind of "Bible culture," this stealing of the livery of heaven to serve the devil in, threatens a more terrible calamity than what has thus far been witnessed. The burning embers of that latent fire which has been kindled by professed veneration for the Bible, and abhorrence of the intolerant violence of Catholicism, is constantly being fanned by just such religious newspapers as, for more than eight weeks prior to the riot, labored incessantly to bring it on; and even now, while the voice of the blood of their butchered victims is crying to heaven for vengeance, plots and schemes are being agitated by the same combined interests to consummate their work of cruelty and death.

Eighth. *Seeking the aid of popery to exclude the heavenly volume from schools.* When, where and how have we sought the aid of popery for that or for any other purpose? The charge is as false as the source from which it emanates is base and degraded. The Catholics occupy the same ground in regard to making a mere school book of the Bible as the Protestant daughters, only the Catholics at this time in America manifest a far more tolerant and republican spirit.

They contend for their rights to use their own Bible in their own schools, and are willing their Protestant offspring shall have the same privilege; but they object, and justly too, to being taxed to pay for teaching a Protestant version of the Bible in any school. They do not ask that Protestants or others should be taxed to support Catholic schools, or that Catholic Bibles should be forced upon the common schools; but they are unwilling that the Protestants should take such liberties with the common schools, as they are unwilling in return to allow them. The Protestants would think it very hard if the Catholic Bible should be adopted as a text-book in the common schools, and they would immediately withdraw their children, if they could not support theirs for such schools; nor could they be censured for doing so. Why then are they so unwilling to do unto others as they would that others should do to them? But they tell us the Catholics have always been a persecuting, oppressive and cruel people whenever they have gained the ascendency. This we admit: and so have the Protestants, invariably, wherever they have had the opportunity; and we could just as safely trust the one as the other with power to persecute. The very worst features of Catholicism that could be culled from the whole history of that people, would suffer very little by fair comparison with the late scenes at Philadelphia.

Ninth. *Forcing a necessity for explanation of the Scriptures from acknowledged ignorance.* The thought never entered our mind, that the teaching of what the Arminians call religion, or Bible culture, in the schools would or could supersede the necessity of preaching the Gospel by those whom God Himself has called to the work of the ministry; but it really appears, from the remark in the *Banner,* that this is one important object with them, to incorporate religion with the classics, and then forbid all but classical scholars preaching. Thus the proscription of the ministers of the Gospel whom God has called to the work, and who are

generally found among the unlearned. But the poor scribber is much mistaken if he supposes that we require to force a necessity for explaining the Scriptures; a necessity is laid upon all such as God has sent, and woe to them if they preach not the Gospel; and the more they see of the machinations of men upon the subject the more do they feel constrained to "cry aloud and spare not." But who has acknowledged that those whom God has raised up to preach His Gospel, because not versed in the classics, are ignorant? Truly they may be ignorant of many of the sciences - as also are these so-called preachers - they may be but poor scholars in the erudition of the world, but this they are not called to teach; their calling is of God, and they are required to speak as the Spirit shall give them utterance, not in the excellency of speech which man's wisdom teaches, but with the ability that God giveth. The New School, Arminian, and work-mongrel preachers require the wisdom of this world that they may know how to use guile, and to handle the word of God deceitfully, to beguile unstable souls, and by feigned words and fair speech to allure, through much wantonness of the flesh, and make merchandise of their hearers. But the Old School Baptists, who have laid aside all guile and renounced the hidden things of dishonesty and desire not to walk in craftiness, have no occasion to learn the tricks of scholastic divinity, and they can well afford to be ignorant of that sort of science in which the New School make their boast.

But if our accuser means to insinuate that the preachers among the Old School are ignorant of the Gospel, of the work of the Spirit, he understands not what he says, nor whereof he affirms. If the men of the *Banner and Pioneer* would cast aspersions upon the ministers of the Old School, let them know that we do not have to manufacture our ministers, we receive none among us except such as we believe the King of Zion has raised up, called, qualified, and sent among us, and

if they do not suit the New School, they are completely adapted to the sphere in which God has called them to move, and all the calumny and abuse heaped on them is only carrying on the war between the accusers and the God of Zion.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
June 15, 1844

THE BIBLE AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

THE same spirit that was manifested by the king of Babylon when he passed a decree that all his subjects should worship Daniel's God, is now manifested by a set of zealous religious fanatics in the city of Philadelphia, in their attempts to force the bible into the public schools as a text book, together with a set of teachers and books which favor their sectarian views. The passions of the common people are strongly appealed to by leading and influential clergymen, and large mobs are collected into public squares to hear the incendiary and infatuating declamation of the ringleaders of this fanatical party. By the wicked misrepresentations of those who profess to hold the spiritual guardianship of the nation, the common people are made to believe that an order has been sent over from the pope of Rome, to exclude the reading of the bible from our children; and the impression is attempted to be made that our children can have no opportunity of reading the bible, unless it is provided by law that *that* book shall be read in the public schools; but, how far is this from the truth? According to the constitution of our nation, and of all the states, all sects of religionists are recognized as having equal rights, none to be patronized by the government to the prejudice or proscription of others. The public schools are sustained at the public expense; the cost of them is raised, directly or indirectly, from all classes of the people subject to taxation, without reference to their politics or religion. It is, therefore, proscriptive, unjust, unconstitutional, and wicked, to apply the money of Jews, Pagans, Papists, christians or infidels, without their consent, to the support of any system of religion in which they do not all agree. This course of the clergy, striking, as it does, at the root of the civil and

religious liberty, threatens our nation with all the horrors of speedy persecution, misery, and blood.

They talk much about *a bible without note or comment,* but still insist that the teacher and visitors of the schools shall comment upon the scriptures, and it is well known that no school book finds favor in their eyes, that is not corrupted by some of their religious opinions. What is the difference, whether the bible be introduced into the schools with note and comment printed and bound within its lids, or, that the bible be in one book, and the notes and comments in other books?

Is it not enough for every sect, that they be allowed to teach whatever system of religion they please, *at their own expense?* Why should any wish to monopolize our public institutions? If the Presbyterians, Methodists, or Baptists, wish to teach religion as a science in their schools, they have only to get up schools at their own expense, and the right is guaranteed to them by our constitution and laws; and, the same right belongs also to their papal and other neighbors; but it is as unjust to apply the money of the Papists to support Protestant sectarianism, as it would be to take the money raised by taxation from the Protestants, and apply it to teach the peculiar doctrines of the Roman Catholic religion. In neither case would it be any better than highway robbery.

While the fanatics of our age seem conscious that their religion must be established and maintained like that of their prototype, (Cain,) by violence and force of arms, we have reason, as Old Fashioned Baptists, to rejoice that "their rock is not as our ROCK, our enemies themselves being judges." "God is our refuge and strength;" and he "hates robbery for burnt offerings." His "kingdom is not of this world," not can

its foundations be made stronger by human legislation, or its interests promoted by oppression, proscription, or falsehood.

Brethren, it is our firm conviction that the party which has been so long and so insidiously laboring to establish THE MAN OF SIN, in the union of secular and ecclesiastical power upon the ruins of our liberty, is now using all its power and influence to effect its wicked purpose, by corrupting all the fountains of primary instruction in our country. Their object is to unite the public schools with the Sabbath and Theological schools, and bring them under the control of clerical aspirants. Let this be done, and the boasted freedom of America is gone forever.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
April 15, 1844.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 427 - 429

THE BIBLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

"The editor of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the organ of the Old School Baptists, attacks in no very mild terms or gentle spirit, the recent meeting of Protestants of various denominations in Philadelphia, to oppose the attempts of the Papists of that city to banish the bible from the common schools. He deems their proceedings fanatical, sympathizes with the Papists in their efforts to discard the bible, and if we comprehend him aright, which is sometimes a matter of difficulty, think that is not a fit book to be read in school, and that the compilations for the use of schools ought to have no religious matter in them. Well, strange things will sometimes occur. A professed Baptist joining with the Papists in preventing the use of the Bible in schools! That interdicted book tells us, in that same day Herod and Pilate were made friends." – *Rel. Herald.*

One would suppose on reading the above article, that the editor of the *Herald* was an admirer of mild terms and gentle spirits; but with all his courtesy and gentleness, it will be seen that he would gladly make the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the official organ of all Old School Baptists, and hand us as a body over, with the proscribed Catholics, to the tender mercies of the "Protestant Association" of Philadelphia. Because the Old School Baptists are not ready to take the bible in one hand, and the incendiary torch in the other, and with the Protestant Association, put all civil and military power of our country at defiance, trample under foot the constitution and laws of our country, and butcher down such as they may mark as heretics, we are charged with discarding the bible, and joining with the Papists in preventing its being read. The editor of the *Herald,* who for

the last twelve years has been familiar with the peculiar sentiments of the Old School Baptists, will find it difficult to conceal the baseness of his insinuation. He knows full well, that our unyielding attachment to the scriptures, as our only rule of faith and practice, has made us the objects of his cruel hate and bitter aspersions, from the day that a company of Old School Baptists, at their meeting at Black Rock, Md., refused any longer to recognize him and his New School associates, as Baptists of the primitive order, because they had gone out from us, and had left the order of the gospel, and embraced heresies to which we could not subscribe. And well he knows, that at any moment since that separation, the New School Baptist would gladly have ceased their hostilities against us, if we would but consent to lay aside our bibles, and adopt their rules.

Much pains had been taken by the Protestants to represent the Catholics as the aggressors in the late frightful riots of Philadelphia. But how stand the facts? Whatever the history of that sect may show of persecutions and cruelties in former times and in other countries, no spirit of insubordination to the laws of our country, or disposition to invade the rights of other sects, had been manifested by them, to draw down the wrath of their neighbors; when an alliance as anti-christian as it is anti-republican, was entered into by several of the most popular, powerful, and influential denominations, and New School Baptists among the rest, expressly to suppress Catholicism in the United States. We appeal to all who retain one spark of that patriotism which glowed in the bosoms of our revolutionary sires, is it either republican or christian for any number of religious sects to unite their energies to proscribe and exterminate another sect? Was it not the design of the founders of our government that all men should have equal rights, in regard to their religious privileges? The very foundation of this "holy alliance," or unholy alliance, was in itself an aggression; but here it did not end; vast sums of

money were collected, printing establishments called into requisition, missionaries employed, and numerous public lectures were given to excite the people against the Papists, as citizens, for this was the only vulnerable point of attack; as professed christians they held no doctrine or practice which could not be found also among these very Protestants which had leagued themselves against them.

As citizens, the Catholics were taxed in common with others for the support of our government, and were entitled to an equal representation in that government; not as Catholics, but as citizens; but the Protestant Association, by whom, also, the Native American party has been originated, made a direct attack upon their rights of suffrage, and required even a change of constitution, which was framed by our fathers, and established at the expense of blood and treasure, in order to disfranchise the Catholics.

It is urged, the Catholics had attempted to expel the bible from the public schools, and deprive our children of the use of that blessed book. But is this a fair statement of the case? By no means. The truth is, the Catholics and the Protestants occupy the common ground, in relation to the matter of teaching their religion as a science, only the Protestants insist on using the Catholic's money, without their consent, to teach the science of their religion, and the Catholics demur, and plead the constitution of the country for their protection. The Protestants are not willing to be taxed to teach the Catholic bible to their children, and the Catholics also protest against being compelled to support a bible and system of scholastic divinity in which they do not believe. Then where is the difference? If the one party are justifiable, then, so are the other. Let those who have become exasperated against the Catholics for objecting to support schools where the king James translation of the bible is used and Protestant doctrines are taught, ask themselves the question, whether

they would willingly have our schools use the Catholic bible, and teach the Catholic religion? We would die before we would submit to it; why then impose upon them an injury which we consider worse than death?

While Mr. Sands, of the *Herald,* would charge upon the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and upon the Old School Baptists, a union with Catholics, like that of Herod and Pilate, the charge returns to its legitimate source. The SIGNS, and the Old School Baptists, have no connection with any kind of religion, Catholic or Protestant, Jew or Pagan, that an be taught as a science. We give to none of them a preference; we discard them all alike, while we hold and profess that religion which is purely a revelation from God, by his Holy Spirit, which we received not of man, neither were we taught it but by revelation. That religion of which it is written, "they shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord;" that in which they shall be all taught of God, from the least of his covenant children even unto the greatest; that which is absolutely hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes, because so it has seemed good in the sight of our God.

We are aware that the teaching religion as a science in the public schools, was the ostensible bone of the contention in Philadelphia; but the Catholics are as willing to teach religion as a science as are the Protestants; the latter are indebted to the former for the practice, the theory, and the art of scientific divinity. The dispute is as to which religion shall be taught. The Catholics have private schools, convents, &c., where their religion is taught according to their interpretation of their own bible, and at their own expense. The Protestants also have their divinity schools. Let these schools be sustained by those who have use for them, and there will be no cause of contention. In a city like Philadelphia, there are among the taxable citizens, Catholics, Protestants, Jews,

Friends, and Old School Baptists. These sects are all taxed to support a common school, and all have children which they wish to have educated. Confine these schools to strictly educational purposes, and all may realize the benefit; but the moment these schools are seized upon as church property for sectarian purposes, they cease to be useful, and become the fruitful source of contention, and ultimately of persecution. Wrap it up as we may, if we make a study of the common version of the bible a part of common school education, we violently rob the Jew and the Catholic of their money, and their rights, which are dearer still, to support our religion; nor can this difficulty be remedied by the substitution of any other bible or oracle. The only plan then upon which public schools, supported by legal provisions, can possibly be sustained and made useful to all classes, without proscription or discord, is to restrict them to their appropriate sphere; to teach in them what properly belongs to the various branches of literature. There is room enough for all to enjoy their conscientious rights in our country. Those who wish to teach their religion as a science, are at full liberty to establish schools of their own, distinct from the common schools. The Catholics may have their converts, their daughters of every Protestant name can have their Sunday Schools, colleges, and theological schools, and leave the church of Christ under the instruction of Him who taught as never man teaches. Dearly as we love the bible, we cannot consent to rob our neighbors of their rights nor of their money to teach it to our children. We love it too well to so grossly violate its instructions. The Lord hates robbery for burnt offerings.

In conclusion, we will appeal to the editor of the *Religious Herald,* and to the "Protestant Association," is there not a fearful responsibility resting upon you, stained as you are with the blood of those victims which have fallen in the two late riots at Philadelphia? Go feast your guilty eyes upon the mangled bodies whose massacre you have occasioned, count

the number of distracted widows and wretched orphans you have made; survey the ruined walls of those churches as they were called, which your religion has prompted you to burn, and the ashes of the library which your desire for the diffusion of knowledge led you to commit to the devouring element; mark the consternation which you have occasioned, the dreadful array of your minions against the military and civil powers of the land, and remember there is a day of dreadful retribution, for "THE LORD SEETH."

New Vernon, N.Y.,
August 1, 1844.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 472 - 477

BLACK, BUT COMELY

Elder Beebe: - I am requested by a sincere lover of the truth to solicit your views on Songs 1:5 - "I am black, but comely," etc.
Yours truly,

REPLY: It affords us great pleasure at all times to give such views as we have upon the Scriptures to those who sincerely love the truth; for we feel perfectly confident that all who sincerely love the truth are born of God, and taught by his spirit. To love the doctrines of men who have stolen the livery of truth to disguise their deformity and deceive the simple - although error so disguised may become popular in the world - requires no gracious operation of the Spirit to make me love it: for all men, in their native enmity to God, love error; but none can either know or love the truth sincerely until they have felt its power, and tasted its sweetness. The truth as it is in Jesus always magnifies and honors God, and at the same time abases the creature. Hence, whatever men may profess or pretend, until they are born of God and know experimentally the power of God's love shed abroad in their hearts, they are inwardly opposed to the truth. But to the subject.

"*I am black, but comely.*" This seemingly paradoxical expression is made by one who is called the fairest among women; an enquirer after the truth; one who is seeking for the place where her Beloved feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon. Although we presume the personage thus describing herself as both black and comely was undoubtedly intended to represent the Gentile church, we see no impropriety in applying her language as expressive of the sentiments and experience of every individual child of God whose heart the Lord has inclined to enquire the way to

Zion, with his face set thitherward. The spouse of the Redeemer, the bride, the Lamb's wife, and all the individual members of the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, when filled with the love of God are, as in the text, drawn out to seek him whom their soul loveth; and diligently to enquire for the footsteps of his flock. But the mystery of the complex character of saints, or the church, is the subject of the present enquiry. How can she be black and yet comely; as her complexion would indicate that she was uncomely in the extreme, and so very black as to seem to challenge nature to produce a parallel As black as the tents of Kedar, which were probably the most unsightly and black of any thing that could be named as a comparison; yet, while thus hideous and ugly, at the same time as spotless white and pure as the curtains of Solomon.

When the church, or when the individual christian, is heard to speak of their blackness, we understand them to speak of their earthly, depraved, unrenewed nature; and surely there is nothing that looks to them so hateful. They are truly amazed that God should have set his love on sinners of so deep a dye. While they can see nothing in their nature but vileness or in their conduct but sin and transgression against God, their heart is the cage of every hateful and unclean bird, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. O, how black and loathsome they appear to themselves to be. It is true they were unconscious of their vileness until the Sun had looked upon them; or until a revelation of Christ is made: as in the absence of the Sun, we are in total darkness, and cannot tell how disgustingly black and vile we appear until the light comes, which makes manifest: but then we felt the weight of our depravity. And as in nature, the more a person is exposed to the burning rays of the midsummer sun, the blacker they grow. So with the Christian, the more thoroughly they are made acquainted with the righteousness of God, the more effectually they become convinced of the

guilt and pollution of their own nature, and the wretched pollution of all human righteousness; until at length they become fully convinced that there is nothing short of the dirty, smoky tents of Kedar to which they can compare themselves. This is the effect of the Sun's looking upon them. Take, for an example, the prophet Isaiah. Hear him exclaim - "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isa. 6:5) And Peter, when the Son looked on him in the palace of the high priest, went out and wept bitterly. And was it not even so when God looked upon us in the righteousness of his holy law; when the commandment came, and light broke forth in which we saw our own vileness that we could say we were black indeed, because the Son, which is the fountain and source of all true light, had looked on us. How did we then cry out, "Woe is me, for lam undone!" And from that moment on every one who has been enlightened to behold the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ will say with Job, "I have heard of thee O God, with the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; therefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes." Truly the more we know of God, the more we enjoy of his presence throughout our whole pilgrimage, the greater will be our sense of our own personal vileness; until like Paul we shall exclaim, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Surely I am as black as the tents of Kedar; but at the same time I am -

Comely as the curtains of Solomon. While all our earthly nature is black with sin and depravity from the sole of the foot even unto the head, we are bruises and wounds and putrefying sores, so that there is no soundness in us, we have, nevertheless, a life which is hid with Christ in God, which is all fair. That which is born of the flesh is *flesh,* and "All flesh is as grass, and the goodliness thereof is as the

flower of grass;" it fadeth and falleth away. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; for it is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. It cannot sin because it is born of God, and the seed abideth in it. This spiritual life in us is as pure as the fountain from which it emanates; for it is Christ in us, the hope of glory. It cannot be contaminated or defiled with sin, or stained with guilt; and it is therefore whiter than snow, and unblemished as the curtains of Solomon. In ourselves we are black as the tents of Kedar; but in our Lord Jesus Christ we are fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. We have no comeliness but that which our Redeemer has put upon us. He found us in our blood, left in the open field to the loathing of our persons; and the Lord says to Jerusalem in Ezek. 16:8-14, "Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine. Then washed I thee with water, yea, I throughly washed away thy blood from thee, and I anointed thee with oil. I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers' skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk. I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck. And I put a jewel on thy forehead, and earrings in thine ears, and a beautiful crown upon thine heard. Thus wast thou decked with gold and silver; and thy raiment was of fine linen, and silk, and broidered work; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom. And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty: for it was perfect *through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God.*" To all of which Jerusalem responds, (Isa. 61:10) "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments

of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

"Defil'd and loathsome as we are,
He makes us white, and calls us fair."

"My filthy rags are laid aside:
He clothes me as becomes his bride:
Himself bestows my wedding dress,
The robe of perfect Righteousness."

Middletown, N.Y.
January 1,1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 110 - 113

“BLACK ROCK IMPOSITION”!!!

(*Ir*) *Religion Herald, – World, – Cross,* –"Hands off,” &c. *Baptist Repository.*

The communications of Brethren Trott, and Reis, in reference to the false and slanderous article published in the Herald, and eagerly copied into the Repository, World, Cross &c., under the above significant heads, – we conclude are superseded by the following denial of Elder Healey, and the reluctant recantation of the Herald.

From the Religious Herald.

“*Black Rock Convention.* – In conversation with Brother Healey, during our recent visit to Baltimore, concerning the Black Rock Address, he remarked that he had written to the Editor of the Signs of the Times to have his name taken off. We supposed he alluded to the address; it appears from the following note that it was only to take his name off as agent for the Signs of the Times. We wish our good brother had been more explicit – as the case now stands he will probably be claimed by both parties. As this address disclaims fellowship with all the supporters of benevolent institutions, comprising three-fourths of the Baptists of the United States, it is certainly a matter of importance to decide this point at once.”

“Elder John Healey never wished to be understood as having written to Eld. G. Beebe to take off his name from the Black Rock Address! The letter (for only one was written,) requested Brother Beebe to take off his name from the Signs of the Times, as agent for the paper: it was only in conversation with Brother B., he told him that he could not

go with him in the eleventh article in the Signs of the Times relative to Bible Societies, &c.”

“Brother Healey request that those Editors who copied our previous remarks will also insert this explanation.”

REMARKS

Thus our readers may see how soon the calumny and false representation which has been started by the Herald and so industriously circulated through other *kindred* channels evaporates into *thin air*, when for a moment exposed to the searching rays of TRUTH. As the darkness that broods over the earth by night, flies before the rising dawn of day, so flies these mists of falsehood, at the bold advance of truth.

It must be, not a little mortifying to these skillful *archers who have been shooting* sorely at the Black Rock Address, to find their arrows with redoubled velocity, returning to their own bosoms, and themselves falling into the very pit which they have digged for these who can only delight in the old paths of Zion.

For it will be seen that the whole volley leveled at the Black Rock Meeting – dwindles down to – what? Black Rock Imposition!! Hands Off!! “Hands off from what? And pray what is the Imposition, that the Old school Baptist at Black Rock have been guilty of? Why Elder J. Healey, on account of old age, infirmity &c., (as his Letter will show,) has written to Elder Gilbert Beebe to take off his name! from what? Not the Black Rock Address, but from the list of Agents for the Signs of the Times. Now candid reader; where is the imposition. WE have in a former number, acknowledged the receipt of this Letter, and we did immediately upon its receipt, drop his name as our Agent for Baltimore, and in his stead appointed

our worthy Brother J.B. Preston, agreeably to the recommendation given by Elder Healey.

Mr. Sands and his coadjutors offer no apology for having wantonly slandered the Brethren of the Black Rock Meeting. No, this could not be expected from those who have removed so far from the neighborhood of candor, (not to say religion) but as might have been expected, they have endeavored to shift the blame off on to Eld. Healey, and attempt to pacify his mind by calling him their *Good Brother*.

"*We supposed he alluded to the Address*." Then this is all a mere supposition!! and yet published as a fact obtained from the very mouth of Elder Healey, during a personal interview. If Mr. Sands had been an honest man, would he not have published this as a supposition? – Would any honest man, would any Christian publish in the most positive terms that the Brethren who met at Black Rock were a set if Imposters – or, (to use his own words, amounting to the same thing in substance) "Black Rock Imposition," upon a mere unfounded supposition? We think not. Again, being convicted of so gross a departure from truth, if he were as ready to confess his faults, as he is to slander the Old School Baptist, wold he not say, "I have wronged these people by charging them with imposition, and even forgery, and now I wish to make all the satisfaction in my power."

But not a word of this appears, his only justification, is embraced in this short sentence "*We supposed he alluded to the Address*." But with what ingenuity this sagacious Editor attempts to shift off, the wrong upon Brother Healey. "We wish our *good Brother* had been more explicit." But what cold Mr. S. want more explicit, he tacitly acknowledges that Bro. Healey did not authorize him to say what he has said.

Only observe the difference. In his first article Mr. Sands says, "His (Elder Healey's) name had been appended to the Black Rock Address," evidently implying that it was done without his knowledge or consent. Second, "He informed us, that he attended the meeting under the impression that the object was only designed to present an exhibition of doctrinal views," implying that he had been decoyed by designing men, when Bro. Healey himself with others had called the said meeting.

Third. "He also states that he declared to the Brethren present, that he could not join them in their Anti-Mission Crusade, because he was then and always had been friendly to Missionary operations."

This part of the bitter role, Mr. Sands has eaten up. Passing also his having written to the Editor of the "Signs of the Times," which statement is also contradicted – we notice.

Fourth, "And he further authorized us to publish to the world, that he did not wish to be considered as belonging to that party – that he could not countenance or support the Anti-Mission views contained in that Address. He also begs the favor of the Editors of the Baptist Periodicals to notice that he renounces *all connection* with this body."

And now this same Mr. Sands, Editor of the Religious (so called) Herald, wishes that "our good Brother had been more explicit." Very strange, Mr. Sands!! We of the Old School would call the above very *explicit* language, and in our former remarks we observed that we very much doubted whether Elder H. was the author of them, for we did, and do still believe him to be a man of truth, and it would give us pleasure if we could, say the same of the Editor of the "Religious Herald," but this alas! we cannot – for Elder Healey either did, or did not make the above statements to you. If

he did, you could certainly wish nothing more explicit, you could not have been at loss to gather from such statements, which side of the Black Rock Address *our venerable* Brother was on. Nor are we easy to believe in that case Brother Healey, would have wrote to you the above note – saying that he never wished to be so understood.

But if he has never authorized you to publish to the world the above statements, nor to beg (in his name) of all other Editors to publish them, you must be guilty of two sins. WE leave it to your conscience to give them a name, nothing doubting that if it be not seared with an *hot iron*, it will ring like thunder in your ears; slander and falsehood!!

One word concerning Mount Zion church &c., you said in your first publication, that his church was opposed to Blackrockism, this we will not deny, as this is an *ism*, that we have never learned; but you add, she "did not send messengers to the convention, (meaning as we presume the B.R. Meeting.) Let it be observed that this was not a meeting of delegates from churches – although some few of the Brethren perhaps were appointed by the churches to which they belonged. But the circular of Elder Healey and others, calling the meeting, simply invited "All Ministering Brethren distinguished by the name of *Old School Baptists*, in the U.S. to attend; hence if Mt. Zion church had been of the denomination invited, she would have had no occasion to appoint delegates. Mr. Joseph Metttam, with several other members did attend, and some, if not all of them acted in concert with the meeting – and Bro. Mettam, did in our presence voluntarily sign his name to the Address.

We are authorized by Brother Edmund J. Reis, Pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist church to say that the statement in the Religious Herald, as far as it related to that church is false.

Mr. Sands, expresses some concerns, lest Bro. Healey, should be claimed by both parties* and seems to urge the necessity of an immediate decision, and lest he should not fall on the side with Mr. S. he holds forth the all-enticing bait viz: the multitude &c. But not being satisfied with this he gave another wanton misrepresentation of the Black Rock Address viz: that the Address disclaims fellowship with all the supporters of Benevolent Institutions, comprising three fourths of the Baptist in the United States."

We challenge Mr. Sands to prove his statement. We will send him an extra paper containing the Address in question, in which if he can produce words to the above amount, he will perhaps do himself at least some credit.

And in the mean time, for the use of such of our readers as have not read the Black Rock Address. We give the following extract, that they by comparing it with Mr. Sands assertions may be the better prepared to judge how much weight should be allowed the testimony of such a man.

[Extract from the Black Rock Address.]

Now Brethren, addressing ourselves to you who profess to be, in principle Particular Baptists, of the "Old School," but who are practicing such tings as you have learned only from a New School it is for you to say – not us, whether we can longer walk in union with you. We regret and so do you, to see br'n. professing the same faith, severing apart. But if you will compel us either to sanction the traditions and inventions of men, as of religious obligation, or to separate from you, the sin lieth at your door. If you meet us in churches to attend only to the order of Christ's house as laid down by himself; and in associations, upon the ancient principles of Baptist Associations, i.e., as an associating of the churches for keeping up a brotherly correspondence one with another,

that they may strengthen each other in the good ways of the Lord; instead of turning the associations into a kind of legislative body, formed for the purpose of contriving plans to help along the work of Christ, and for imposing those contrivances as burdens upon the churches, by resolutions &c., as is the manner of some, we can still go on with you in peace and fellowship.

Thus Brethren, our appeal is before you. – Treat it with contempt if you can despise the cause for which we contend, i.e., conformity to the word of God. But indulge us, we beseech you, so far at least, as at our request to sit down and carefully count the cost on both sides; and see whether this shunning reproach by conforming to mens notions will not in the end be a much more expensive course, than to meet reproach at once, by honoring Jesus as your only King, *choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season*.
And *rebellion*, you know, *is as the sin of witch-craft*.

* Brother Healey is of age, he is a free man, he lives under a free government – he will act we trust from principle, otherwise the Old school have no claim on him. We have no splendid toys to allure him, nor do we boast of numbers.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Signs of the Times
Volume 2, No. 7
March 5, 1834

BLACK ROCKISM.

"A Traveller," has informed the public through the columns of the Cross & Journal, that the combined spirit of Anti-nomianism and Anti-Mission apostasy is denominated in Philadelphia, Black Rockism; and that one or two churches in that city present some dark spots of that apostasy, which as he intimates, also afflicts *terribly* some portion of the Baptist denomination in the west.

Now lest it should so happen that some of our readers should not exactly understand the *lingo* of the *Traveller* sufficiently to comprehend his meaning we will offer a word or two in explanation. – The *Traveller* speaks of two *spirits*. We will notice them in the order in which he has named them. And first, the spirit of Anti-nomianism: Without laboring to show the true etymology of this word, we will simply notice it in its present common use. It is most commonly applied in modern times to the licentious sentiments, said to be held by some, that they must sin in order that grace may abound; and taking this as his meaning, we are left with our *Yankee* privilege of guessing what churches in Philadelphia hold such sentiments. The 'Traveller,' might have had some references to a Church in Sansom St., which some years ago built a very splendid Meeting-house on the circular plan, and in the building of which deeply involved themselves debt – having first given mortgages on the house and lot for security, and when mortgages would no longer answer for security, pledged their credit as Christians, as Baptists, &c.; and with this raised several thousand dollars from widows, orphans and others, who were led to believe that their living was invested in the hands of honest and responsible christians, and finally raised about $80,000, or involved themselves in a debt to nearly that amount, in order *that grace might thereby abound*. Now when this church could no

longer bear up under the burden of interest which annually accumulated on this enormous debt, they Resolved what to do. And what reader do you imagine they resolved to do? To pay off the debt honestly and honorably as one would suppose a Christian people in duty bound? No, this was by no means their case. If our information be correct, and we have no just reason to doubt it, they adopted the following novel course, viz: First, dismissed a number of their members to form a new Church, and when these were constituted, dissolved the Church relation of the others and gave and received every one a letter to join the newly organized Church; whereupon the Trustees resigned their office, and suffered the deserted Meeting-house to be sold at Mortgage sale, which was struck off by the Sheriff under the hammer for about $7,000. It was afterwards purchased by the newly constituted church for about that amount, and thus by changing their name they were enabled to rid themselves of an intolerable debt, and to leave the widow, orphans, and all others who were thrown out of their honest dues, to make the best of it they could.

This might be viewed by the censorious Traveller as Anti-nomianism, or a sort of sinner that grace might abound. Had this people paid the debt which they so justly owed, it might have so seriously impoverished them as to render it impracticable for them to cut so conspicuous a flourish in their subsequent contributions towards the salvation of the world; or being pinched for funds they might not have been able to buy such expensive preachers as a *Dagg*, or a *Gillett;* or they might have been deprived at least of the privilege of publishing to the world their liberality in assisting to build the Machine which is now about to go into operation under the direction of the Central Convention, for the education and manufacturing of Ministers. As this sort of conniving would among infidels be considered sinful and wicked – and as the money thus withheld from their creditors

is laid out for such pious purposes – we see no reason why this sagacious Traveller should not conclude that they intended to *sin that grace might abound.*

But we may be altogether mistaken in Traveller's views; he might only have had his ey on such Churches in the City of *Brotherly love*, as have formerly stood in the faith and order of the gospel of Christ, and who for the purpose if assisting in the enterprise of converting the world have ventured to sin by forsaking the right way of the Lord, and running greedily after the error of an ancient Prophet whose name was Balaam, and who loved the wages of unrighteousness.

If we have been so happy as to hit upon the meaning of Traveller in his use of the vague word *Anti-nomianism*, we must try also to hit upon his meaning in the application of the word *Anti-mission*. This word in modern times is most commonly used to stigmatize those who refuse to go with the popular tide or new order of the day; yet it might possibly have been used by a transient Traveller, to designate such as are opposed to that Mission which was established by the Great Head of the Church, and who in their opposition do persecute and endeavor to hedge up the way of those who preach by virtue of a mission which they have received from on high. If this was his meaning we marvel that he should have discovered no more than *one or two* churches infected with this corruption.

Traveller informs us that the amalgamation of these spirits has produced *some dark spots of Black Rockism*, in one or two of the churches. We recollect of being informed, when we were last in that City, of some dark spots which had attached to some of the City Churches; but we do not recollect of hearing them called Black Rockism. One of these dark spots was witnessed in a church somewhere in the vicinity of New

Market St. where a poor blind man had been preaching; when after the close of his discourse, the Reverend Pastor arose and addressed the numerous assembly, and informed them that this was a poor and unfortunate man – that he had lost the use of his eyes, and had a large and dependent family – that he was entirely dependent upon on the generosity of those among whom he preached, for support for himself and his helpless family – that he had contracted for a small portion of land up on the interior of the state – which land would place him and family in comparatively easy circumstances if he cold but obtain a little help to pay for it, and with much sobbing and apparent bitterness of soul entreated the assembly to have compassion on the poor minister. A liberal collection was then taken up and put into the hands of the trusty pastor; and how much gentle reader to you suppose the poor Blind Preacher, in whose name the collected was lifted, received? Why he received Five Dollars!! and no more of that collection. He at the same time received in a note from an individual lady Five Dollars; but of the collection begged for him, but the bare Five Dollars was all that this Antinomian, Anti-mission Clergyman, paid over, and when he was closely interrogated by the blind man whether this $5 was all that was collected at that time; he confessed that it was not, but that the balance was reserved for other purposes.

Now this may be one of the *dark spots* alluded to by the *Traveller*. But why the people of Philadelphia should call this kind of wickedness, to use the Traveller's words, *apostasy* – Black Rockism – we do not not pretend to know; unless they wish to pass themselves off for Old School Baptists, and to be called by our name to take away their reproach. We can assure them, if this be their object, that they have missed their mark; for there was not a Baptist at the Black Rock meeting, who would not blush to hold fellowship with the perpetrators of such deeds as are passed

off currently by the Antinomian and Anti-mission apostates of the City of Philadelphia.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
New Vernon, Wednesday August 29.

Signs of the Time
Volume 3, No. 17
August 19, 1835

BORN OF THE WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT: JOHN 3:5.

In our last issue, sister L. Fewell asked for our opinion as to the meaning of these words - whether the words, *born of water,* refer to baptism or to the action of the Holy Spirit.

Various views have been entertained and expressed by some of our most enlightened brethren as to what our Lord referred to by being born of water. That a man must be born again before he can see the kingdom of God seems so perfectly clear as to leave no doubt that a man must be born of the Spirit before he can see or know anything about the things of the Spirit of God. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:14)." It would seem that being born of the Spirit would comprehend and embrace the entire work or quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, in giving birth to those who are begotten of God, and brought into an experimental knowledge of Christ, by the implantation of the Spirit which searches all things, even the deep things of God. No forms of godliness, applications, or ordinances, baptism, or circumcision, or any other with all that can be acquired by education, discipline, or otherwise, can possibly enable an unquickened person to even see the kingdom of God.

As no man, except he be born again, can possibly see the kingdom of God, we infer that every one that is born of the Spirit is divinely qualified to see the kingdom; and are instructed by the word and Spirit to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and they have the assurance that all things else that their Heavenly Father knoweth they need shall be added unto them.

By the *kingdom of God* we understand is intended that kingdom which Daniel and all the prophets prophesied the God of heaven should set up, and which John the Baptist and Christ in their first preaching declared was then at hand, and for the coming of which Christ, before his crucifixion, taught his disciples to pray. All who were born of the Spirit under the old dispensation, especially the prophets, saw and prophesied of that kingdom, as Abraham saw the day of Christ, and was glad. So all who are born of the Spirit since the day of John the Baptist possess that Spirit which capacitates them to see, and which alone can reveal to them that kingdom which is not of the world. The kingdom of God, which being spiritual, and not of the world, is invisible to all who are not born of the Spirit; and it is all that is implied in the word *kingdom.* The kingdom here spoken of cannot mean the universal dominion of God, over all beings and all worlds, for that has always existed; but it refers to the church of God, over which Christ came to preside, which is called a kingdom because it is subject to the laws, ordinances, and special authority of Christ. All who are born again may see it; but to enter into it implies a recognition of the supreme authority of Christ, by a cheerful obedience to his commands. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (Revelation 22:14)." "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 18:2,3)."

There are, we have reason to hope, many who are born again, and who see, and admire the kingdom of our Lord, who have never come into the church by a public recognition of Christ as their King, nor can any one enter this spiritual enclosure without an acknowledgement of, and obedience to, the law and authority of Christ. And the very first precept

binding on a heaven-born subject is to be baptized. Whether gospel baptism was meant by our Lord when he said "Except a man be born of water:" or not, it is true beyond all controversy that no unbaptized person, even though born of the Spirit and able to see the kingdom, can enter the portals of the kingdom of God which Christ was about to organize, and over which he presides. The New Testament clearly shows, not only that Christ required all that were born again to be baptized according to the pattern and example which he had given, but also that no one was received into the church but by baptism. Those at Pentecost on whom the Spirit was poured, who were pricked in their hearts, gladly received the word, were evidently born of the Spirit, yet in coming into the kingdom, the apostle commanded every one of them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls (Acts 2:41)."

Although baptism is the ordinance by which those who are born of the Spirit first acknowledge their allegiance to Christ, and are to be recognized as his subjects, and by which they have right to the tree of life, or privileges of the gospel church, yet baptism of any one who has not been born of the Spirit is a desecration of that sacred ordinance. None are required to keep the commandments of Christ which he has enjoined upon the subjects of his kingdom but those who love him. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." And none can love him except they have passed from death unto life. The Campbellite doctrine, which substitutes immersion for the new birth, is a perversion of the truth and order of the gospel. Those who are immersed by them can no more see nor enter into the church and kingdom of Christ than they could before; they may be immersed into Campbellism, just as others are circumcised or sprinkled into other branches of anti-christ; but without faith it is impossible to

please God, and faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, which none can possibly have unless they are born of God. The marks by which the apostles were authorized to know who were the saved people of God, and whom they were commanded to teach to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded them, were, first faith, then obedience to Christ. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned (Mark 16:16)." The question was clearly stated by the Eunuch to Philip. "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Whatever might hinder the Eunuch would also hinder any other person; and whatever in his case was an indispensable prerequisite to baptism, is equally so to all others. Philip said in reply to this important question, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." That faith which is only possessed by those who are born of the Spirit is an indispensable prerequisite to Christian baptism.

We will not attempt now to argue, in the face of the views of brethren for whose opinions we have great respect, that to be baptized in water is to be born of water, in the sense in which these words were spoken by our Lord to Nicodemus; but we see no reason why gospel baptism should not be figuratively so called, seeing it is an ordinance, the figurative import of which is present at death, burial, and resurrection; and so far as the candidate is personally described, he is represented as renouncing the world and its vanities, and entering into a new element, and brought forth in a new relation to the church as his mother, and to all the saints as his brethren and kindred in Christ. First, he is born of the Spirit, and in which birth he passes from death unto life, is delivered from the power of darkness, and born into God's marvelous light. By baptism, he publicly puts on Christ; and is born into the liberty of the sons of God, into the fellowship, and fellow-citizenship of the saints, and is recognized as a

disciple and follower of Christ. Having his heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed in pure water.

Whether this is the being "born of water" spoken of by our Lord or not, it is certain that without gospel baptism no man can enter lawfully into any gospel church. Other avenues are open to any and all the various branches of anti-christ; but without a Scriptural baptism none can come into the church which is built upon the foundation of the apostles, of which Jesus Christ our Lord is the Chief Corner Stone.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 62 – 65

BROTHER E.D. TURNER'S LETTER

On two points in brother Turner's letter we wish to offer a few remarks, not by way of controversy, for with the general sentiments of his letter we think we are agreed, and probably on every point, when we fully understand each other.

First, in regard to ministerial support. We do not understand that the minister of Christ is placed by the apostle on the list with the poor of the churches, who are to be sustained by the charity of the churches, unless like the poor saints they are in reality poor. But whatever may be the pecuniary circumstances of the minister, if he devotes his time, labor, and worldly interests in the service of the church, the apostle makes it binding on his brethren, according to their ability to aid him in bearing the burden and expense to which he is for their benefit subjected, whether that expense be in time, labor, or money. If the preacher be subjected to no extra expense in time, labor, or money, we know of no claim he has for remuneration from his brethren; if he is poor, then with the poor he is to be cared for. But the law of equality makes it the duty of the saints to equalize the burdens which are required to be borne. If, therefore, the minister, or any other brother, be required to leave his corn field or work-shop and spend his time in the service of the church, or to sustain heavy expenses for the church, or in consequence of the station which he is called to fill in the church, all the brethren in the church who are as able to bear that expense as the preacher is, should step forward willingly and cheerfully, and divide the burden and expense with him.

The other point is in regard to preaching on mysterious subjects. If the minister is to preach only what all the saints understand, why is it required as a ministerial qualification

that he *must be apt to teach?* Is not the ministry for the instruction of the saints, and for their edification? True, secret things belong to God, and things which are revealed belong to us and to our children; but it is equally true that "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." All that the Bible contains, and all that the Spirit of truth makes known are things revealed. Things which the eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man, and which are hidden from the wise and prudent are revealed unto babes; for the spirit searches even the deep things of God, and God hath *revealed* them unto us by his spirit. The case which brother Turner has referred to is in point. That which was a profound mystery to the eunuch was a revelation to Philip, and he preached that mystery to the eunuch, and he was also made to understand and rejoice in the same. Paul said to the Corinthians that he or we preach the wisdom of God in a mystery. Even the hidden wisdom, or secret things of God, which none of the princes of this world knew. Though they were the secret things which belong to God, yet so far as he has by his word and spirit made them known to us, they are things revealed, and belong, by a gracious grant from heaven, to us and to our children, and to all who are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

We preach Christ - this is a mystery. Without controversy, it is a great mystery - God manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Unto Paul it was given that he "should preach among the Gentiles the *unsearchable* riches of Jesus Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the

eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." Eph. iii. 8-11.

We presume that brother Turner only designs to set his face and testimony against vain speculations in regard to preaching and foolish questions about the law, endless genealogies, etc., which serve only to darken counsel, and produce strife and discord among the saints. Our remarks are only intended to prevent others from so construing his words as to make them favor what we are persuaded he does not mean.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 1,1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 171 - 173

BROTHER STIPP, ON SHAKING OF HANDS.

As brother Stipp has felt it his duty to defend the practice of shaking of hands, we make room for his communication on the subject, although we had hoped that the subject had been sufficiently ventilated for all necessary purposes. We had said all that we desired to say in regard to it: and brother Vamneter, as will be seen by a note from him in this paper, has declined to pursue the subject any further. We presumed the brethren generally would form their own judgment, and act accordingly. If in our remarks we implied a charge of idolatry on those who have indulged in the practice, we must have done so inadvertently, and will retract to that extent. We do not believe that those who have favored the practice have done so with any evil design; nor have we ever thought to make the matter a test of fellowship.

We would not now perpetuate the agitation on the subject, but to meet such appeals as brother Stipp has made directly to us; and to correct any misapprehensions any may entertain of our views or feelings on this, and on other subjects. Although we did not design to be understood that our only objection to shaking of hands in time of religious devotion was that it was not taught, or enjoined by the Scriptures, we do think that every thing should be avoided in our religious devotions which has neither precept nor example in the divine rule. But we gave other reasons for our objections, as will be seen by a re-perusal of what we wrote.

If we are indulging in any unscriptural religious practice, we are inexcusable, and we should be ready and willing to give it up; and if we know our own heart, we are. But we are yet to be convinced that the preaching of the gospel at any time or

place where a door is opened for that purpose, and an assembly is convened and willing to give an orderly attendance, though at a funeral, a wedding, or at any other public gathering, provided that in doing so, we are not otherwise transgressing some divine rule. If brother Stipp is under the impression that we are in the habit of performing popish mummeries, saying mass for the dead, or pretending to pray souls out of purgatory, or that we are giving countenance to the notion that we are doing any thing for the purpose of changing the state and condition of the dead, or that we avail ourself of the time when relatives feel tender, to excite their passions, or any thing of the kind, he is greatly mistaken. If we have not mistaken the command of the Holy Ghost by Paul to Timothy, to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season," etc., we have found in it authority to preach the word on all occasions when and where an audience are desirous to hear and willing to listen. And we are inclined to believe that preaching at all times and places is either in season or out of season. We have often publicly protested that our only object in preaching at funerals is to preach the gospel, that we can do nothing to change the state of the dead. If, however, it can be shown that preaching at such times and places is unauthorized by the precepts of Christ, on being convinced we will certainly desist. But should it be fully proved and admitted that we have transcended all gospel authority, we cannot perceive that such a decision would justify any other wrong or unscriptural practice.

Brother Stipp thinks we have encouraged the practice of publishing the verses on the subject of giving and taking "the parting hand," etc. Without attempting any justification of our own wrongs, which we confess are by far too many, we will remind brother Stipp that we have not designedly raised any objection to brethren and sisters shaking hands on meeting and on parting. Indeed, it is the common practice with the Old School Baptists in the East as well as in the West, and

none have perhaps indulged in the practice more heartily than ourself. It is not the taking and parting hand that we object to; for when parting or meeting such greetings seem to us very appropriate. What we understand brother Williams to object to was the interruption of public devotion; as when in preaching a brother expresses a sentiment that is approved, for those who are pleased to offer him their hand to shake.

While, however, we feel partial to the hymn on taking the parting hand as suitable when closing our social meetings, we cannot say so much for the last couplet, copied from our Hymn Book, viz.:

> "To meet you in glory I give you my hand,
> Our Savior to praise in a pure social band."

We do not know of any connection between our hands and the prospect of meeting our kindred in glory. If it is intended to express a pledge or a vow, it is presumptuous and wicked; but if it is only designed to express the giving the hand of Christian fellowship to such as we hope to meet in glory, the sentiment is correct.

On the subject of kissing, with the kiss of charity, we take rather a different view from that we understand brother Stipp to express. Where the apostle commands the saints to greet one another with a holy kiss of charity, we can defend no right to change the kiss for any other form of greeting. We object to receiving baptism as a substitute for circumcision, or sprinkling for baptism, or the first day for the seventh. Brother Stipp has judged us prematurely in his conclusion that we have not conformed to this apostolic injunction. If indeed we have failed, it has been from a lack of that holy unimpassioned fervor of charity which is required; for we have complied with the outward form. It is a common

practice among our Scotch brethren in Canada, and when in their company we have conformed to the practice; also in other places, and among other brethren who are very dear to us. But we should think it disorderly and out of place to interrupt a minister while preaching, either to shake his hand or to kiss him.

We have now said about all we have to say on this subject. We have no desire to force our own peculiar views on our brethren. We will only admonish them in the words of sacred inspiration, to “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 196 – 198

BURMAN MISSION.

THE wife of one of the missionaries in Burmah writes: “In Tavoy, there were baptized the last dry season, about a hundred Karens.” What say our anti-missionary brethren? Is this work of heaven, or of men? Judge ye. If this work be not of the Lord, why has he not ere this brought it to nought? Does not these indications declare to you that heathens are becoming the inheritance of the Lord, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession? - *Banner*

REPLY: What shall we say to such potent arguments - such convincing testimonials as these? One hundred Karens baptized the last *dry season!* And this intelligence established on the assertion of the wife of a missionary at Burmah! And yet the anti-missionaries are required to give an opinion, *Whether this be the work of men, or of God?* We doubt not that our querist intended to strike the poor *anties* dumb, when he made this *knock down* appeal. We have also been informed (not by the wife of a missionary) that the Roman Catholics are receiving great accessions to their church in the Western Valley, and have probably received more than one hundred during the *dry times* in our country. Say, Mr. Waller, does this not prove that the Roman Catholics are from heaven? We are informed by the *American Baptist,* that infidelity and crime are gaining ground in the city of New York. Is infidelity and crime from heaven?What say you, Mr. W.? “If this work be not of the Lord, why has he not ere this brought it to nought?” Pray tell us, Mr. W., as you are learned, which has been of the longest standing, the Burman Mission, or the Catholic faith? And if the long standing of the one will prove its heavenly origin, why will not the same set of arguments prove the same in regard to the other? Surely these questions are in point, and those who are denominated “anti-missionary brethren,” are called on to

answer them; therefore let the answer be given in truth and soberness; and let our answer be handed over, through the columns of the *Banner,* for the consideration of the patrons of that paper, who have witnessed the demand.

First. Does the number of converts embracing any religious profession, prove the religion which they embrace to be of God? If this question can be answered affirmatively by authority of the word of God, we admit its bearings will be exceedingly disastrous to the *little flock,* known in our day as Old School Baptists. But the doctrines of the Pope, and the dream of the false Prophet, will be established, on this kind of testimony, in preference to those of the New School Baptists.

Second. If antiquity be the point on which the argument is to rest, while Popery and Mahomet's delusions stand far, very far, in advance of the New Schoolism, yet the Old School excel them all in these respects, for their origin in visible gospel order has its date at the day of pentecost.

Third. The main question seems to be, whether this work which has resulted in the baptism of a hundred Karens in a *dry season,* is from heaven, or of men? We answer, in our candid opinion, deliberately made up on the force of testimony, It is of MEN.

In evidence that we are not mistaken, we will refer our readers to the records of the missionary institutions, and to their own numerous publications, in which they have given abundant demonstration that the Burmah Mission is the work of men, from first to last, as witness the following "*Shorter Catechism.*"

Question. Who commenced the Burman Baptist Mission?

Answer. L. Rice and A. Judson.

Q. By whom were they sent as Baptist Missionaries?

A. By the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions.

Q. Was this board composed of men?

A. It was.

Q. On whom did Rice and Judson call for patronage in this work?

A. On men.

Q. For what kind of support did they call?

A. Money.

Q. Have the Agents of the Foreign Mission Board ever hinted, or said, that unless men would contribute liberally to the funds of the Society, this mission would fail?

A. They have once and again.

Q. Have these missionaries ever represented that the bestowment of gold and silver, ear-rings, and ladies' jewelry, might save some, yea, many precious souls from the quenchless fires of hell, where without them they must suffer to all eternity?

A. They have.

Q. Has the Pope of Rome ever published a more anti-scriptural or abominable sentiment, or one that more fully proves his opposition to the cause and truth of God, to be the work of men?

A. He has not to our knowledge.

On the whole, let Mr. Waller, or any other advocate, prove to us that the Lord has authorized these institutions, or that he has by his word and Spirit sustained or aided them, and we will yield the argument. But why, says our champion, are they not ere this brought to nought? Does the writer thus intend to dare the thunderbolts of divine vengeance? We say to him, Beware! “What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endureth with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” - Romans ix 22.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
May 19, 1837.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 385 – 388

“BUT PEACE SHALL BE UPON ISRAEL.”

Dear Brother Beebe: I do not like to trouble you too much, but it seems so impressed on my mind that I cannot well avoid it; to ask your views on Psa. cxxv. 5, particularly on the latter clause, “but peace shall be upon Israel.”

Penningtonville, Pa., Dec. 10, 1860.

Reply: The inspired singer in Israel has expressed the security of God’s people in very strong language. “They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever.” But in the text proposed for consideration, another description of character is brought to view. A people who do not trust in the Lord, who are not like Mount Zion, do not abide forever, but turn aside to their crooked ways, and are led forth with the workers of iniquity. The first described are called the Lord’s people. God is their defense; he is round about them as the mountains environ Jerusalem, and as elsewhere expressed, “He is a wall of fire round about them, and a glory in their midst.” The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. They shall not be moved, God shall help them, and that right early. Immovable as the Mount of God, and as securely environed by the divine presence, and as invulnerable as Mount Zion on the sides of the north. Beautiful for situation, and perfectly impregnable in her security. Trusting in God and having no confidence in the flesh, they shall be kept by his mighty power, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

But, “As for such as turn aside unto their crooked ways.” Who are these? and from what do they turn aside? It is true that God’s people do not always feel that confidential trust in God which they desire to feel, and that they find in them a carnal and depraved nature, which often turns aside from the strait and narrow pathway of holiness, to the beggarly elements of the world, causing them much sorrow and lamentation, but still their trust for life and immortality is in God; that is, they have no other trust; they know if it were possible for that to fail them, all would be gone. But the psalmist seems to make a distinction between those apostates, of whom he speaks as turning aside, and Israel, for “The Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, but peace shall be upon Israel.”

Those who turn aside, must be those who have stood, nominally at least, in the ranks of the Lord’s people, or no turning aside would be required to pursue their crooked ways. The christian course is straight forward, pressing towards the mark of their high calling, and looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, but those who pursue any other course, or follow any other leader, religiously, travel in a thoroughfare marked out by the old serpent. Serpents and vipers cannot travel in a straight path, it is contrary to their nature. Those who were called serpents and vipers, by John the Baptist, and the Shepherd of Israel, were remarkably zig zag in their course. At one time they came to John, desiring admission into the Baptist community, at another they boastingly profess to be Moses’ disciples. Sometimes they are delighted with the gracious words spoken by the Redeemer, and anon they attempt to cast him headlong from the brow of the hill. Their piety is at times shocked at seeing the disciples eat corn on the Sabbath, at another they could hire men to swear falsely against the Son of God. With disfigured faces they made long prayers in public places, and with felonious avarice devour widows’ houses. In modern times their serpentine course may be

traced in their pathetic appeals for ameliorating the sufferings of the Hottentots, and the barefooted Indians of distant regions, and in grinding the faces of the poor at home, or in weeping over the cruelty of the heathen nations, and in furnishing Sharp's rifles to murder the citizens of our own country; in distributing copies of the Scriptures, and repudiating the doctrines of the Bible. These are some of their crooked ways, but all their ways are equally crooked. Such as turn aside to their crooked ways, (for no man can pursue them and at the same time walk in the order of the house of God,) the Lord shall lead them forth. By his judgments, choosing their delusions, until they shall be led forth from the society and fellowship of the people of God, to mingle with their fellow workers of iniquity.

The true character of the workers of iniquity may be clearly inferred from the description given of some of them by our Lord. Many of them shall say, Lord, we have prophesied in thy name, preached, cast out devils, and done many wondrous works. But he shall say unto them, Depart from me ye *workers of iniquity,* for I know you not. The development of anti-christ in the last times, should be with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; but a very prominent mark is, his coming is after the *working of Satan;* or working of iniquity. All anti-christian working is upon the ground of distrusting God. As they know not the true God, therefore, they cannot trust him to save his people, and consequently they set about the work to establish their own righteousness. While God's people both labor and suffer reproach because they trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe.

But we are desired to dwell more particularly on the last part of the text, "But peace shall be upon Israel."

The judgments of God in scourging out from the fellowship of his people those who turn aside to their crooked ways is in itself eminently calculated to promote peace upon them that remain. The psalmist prayed to be delivered from strange children. And in Psalm cxx. he complains thus, "Woe is me, that I dwell in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar. My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace. I am for peace, but when I speak, they are for war." And in cxxii. he says, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, Peace be within thee." This is what all the children of God desire, and for it they pray. And Paul exhorts, first of all, that prayers and intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men: for kings and for all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life, in all godliness and honesty, &c. And in all the apostolic salutations to the saints, the prayer ascends to heaven, that grace, mercy and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, may be with them. Peace is a special gift of God. "My peace," said Jesus to his saints, "I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And the inspired prophet testifies, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this." For he of whom Isaiah prophesied, is the Prince of Peace. Israel is God's chosen and redeemed people; they were once in a state of hostility and rebellion against God; enemies to God by wicked works, but now hath he reconciled them by the sacrifice which Jesus offered of himself for them. He has made peace by the blood of his cross, and that peace shall be upon them. His law, the law of the Spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus, is written in

their heart, and wrapped in their affections, and it is written, “Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.” A most beautiful illustration of this assurance is found Isaiah liv. 11-13, “O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colors, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of precious stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

In the present agitated state of our country, where since the days of Puritanic cruelties in the colonies, of hanging reputed witches, and the cart-tail whipping through the streets of the eastern cities, and the incarceration of Baptists in some of the southern colonies, we have enjoyed religious rights, which in the threatened dissolution of our constitutional guarantees may be taken from us, we cannot assure ourselves that the blood of martyrs shall not hereafter flow. But even in that event, those who trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion. And although always at war with anti-christ, the church shall assuredly enjoy that peace which the world cannot give nor take away. But let those who turn aside from the teachings of the Scriptures, to their crooked ways, know the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity. “Come out of her my people,” saith the warning voice from heaven, “that ye be not partakers of her crimes, nor receive of her plagues.”

Middletown, N. Y.
January 1, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 443 – 447

1 CORINTHIANS I. 30.

A CORRESPONDENT in Virginia inquires whether the text 1 Cor. i. 30, teaches that the preacher is of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption, or that Christ is made these things unto us?

From the statement of the question, we infer that some self important preacher has laid claim to the application of these words to those who preach; that as preachers, they are the wisdom of the church. This idea would seem to agree with what Job said ironically to his miserable comforters, "No doubt ye are the men, and wisdom will die with you." Nothing can, however, be more clear, than that these words are spoken in testimony of what Christ is of God made to his church. "But of him are ye in Christ? Of whom God who hath chosen the weak and despised things, &c., is antecedent to the pronoun *Him;* therefore the plain rendering is, "But of God are ye," (that is his people, his new creation; for, if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, old things are passed away, and all things have become new) "in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom," &c. It is not of ourselves, nor of our works, nor of men, nor of angels, that we are in Christ, for if we are in him, "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God bath before ordained that we should walk in them." – Eph. ii. 10 Of God were we set up in Christ from everlasting, chosen of God in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world. – Eph. i. 4 "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." These same scriptures which prove that our existence and security in Christ is absolutely of God, equally demonstrate that our life in Christ is not of our minister, nor of any other

being or power than that of God alone. That Christ, and not the preachers, is made unto the members of his mystical body, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, is so abundantly proved by the united testimony of the scriptures, and so very apparent in the experience of all who are born of God, arguments would be quite superfluous.

First, of God, of the provisions of his counsel, of his grace, and experimentally of the quickening operation of his Holy Spirit, Christ is made unto us wisdom. "We preach Christ and him crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." – l Cor. i. 22, 23. But why is Christ to the one class so essentially different from what he is unto the other? Why is he a stumbling block and foolishness to carnal Jews and Greeks, and the wisdom of God to all that are called? Because God has chosen him so. God has caused us to differ. God has chosen us unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.

Secondly, Of God, Christ is made the righteousness of his people; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, "The Lord our Righteousness." "Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness." Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, &c.

Thirdly, Of God, is Christ our sanctification; by, through, and of him, the saints are set apart unto salvation, consecrated to God, to holiness and eternal life.

Fourthly, Of God, Christ is our redemption. Certainly our minister did not redeem us from sin, guilt, condemnation, wrath and perdition; they paid no ransom price for us, neither was the right of redemption in them. Christ the near kinsman, by virtue of pre-existing relationship, held the legal

right to redeem his people from the curse and dominion of the law, to redeem unto God by his own blood, and having redeemed us with a price, “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,” &c. The New School are welcome to all the wisdom they can find, in their teachers, preachers, or the professors in their universities; for it is foolishness with God; but if the children of God lack wisdom they look for it in Christ, and ask it of him who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. They are welcome to all their own, and all the righteousness they can derive from their preachers; it is too defective, ragged and filthy, for the bride, the Lamb’s wife. We covet not their consecration through the services of their clergy. Christ our Priest having by his own blood ascended into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us. We give not one longing look after that redemption which is supposed to be by such corruptible things as silver and gold, or works, or efforts of men or of angels.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
March 1, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 408 – 410

I CORINTHIANS II. 13.

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

To us it seems important at the present time, that the testimony of the apostles upon the subject embraced in this text, should be kept before the church of God, both for their admonition and consolation. For their admonition, because the temptation to regard worldly wisdom as being in some manner or to some extent connected with the prosperity of the cause of God, is much stronger and more insinuating and seductive than it has been in ages past. If in all ages of the church, and under all circumstances, it has been necessary to observe this solemn admonition of the apostle, now that evil men and seducers have grown worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived, it is the more needful that we take heed to those words which we have heard spoken, lest at any time we should let them slip.

It is important also that we refresh the memory of the saints upon this important subject for their consolation, seeing that they are greatly reproached by their adversaries for their lack of the wisdom which the world teaches. Caricatures, slurs, reproaches, ridicule and taunting jeers are dealt out upon our churches and the servants of the churches with an astonishing profusion, and many are made sad, and feel mortified when reproached for their ignorance of the popular sciences of the world. To call the attention of that poor and afflicted people who are everywhere spoken against to the consolations of the gospel, is calculated to fortify them for the encounter of the enemy. There is a peculiar fitness at the present moment in the application of the text under consideration, to the ministry of the gospel ordained by

Christ. Showing, first, what things (by scriptural authority and apostolic example) are to be preached. Second, the manner in which these things were preached by the apostles, and are to be preached by Christ's ministers.

1st. The things to be preached are those which none of the princes of this world know. The princes and aristocracy of this world have generally been familiar enough with the sciences of the world, and that wisdom which all intelligent creatures may, to a greater or less degree, acquire. But had they been able by worldly wisdom to comprehend spiritual things, they might have understood the true character of Christ, which would have arrested the execution of the purpose of God, in the redemption of his people, for if they had known it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

2d. The things spoken of by the apostles and to be preached by the ministers of all apostolic churches, are those of which it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Superhuman qualifications are therefore indispensable to prepare the preacher to set them forth, and the hearer to comprehend them, seeing that our natural faculties, however capacious, have never, can never attain to a knowledge of them. Things that are not revealed to sense, can never be communicated to sense by worldly wisdom, moral suasion, or taught or learned as worldly sciences are communicated.

3d. The things spoken by the apostles and to b reiterated by the ministers of Jesus, are those which are revealed unto us, (the church of God) by the Spirit. Things which are, or can be learned by application to study, in schools or colleges, are not the things which the apostles preached. They preached among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ; and things which are unsearchable, like their divine Author,

cannot be found out by the searching of men; for if they could, they would not be unsearchable. The Spirit, and that Spirit only, can search the deep things of God. The argument of the apostle in verse 11 of the same chapter is conclusive: "For what mall knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "Now, (continues the apostle) we (the saints) have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and this Spirit of which the saints are born, is not the spirit of the world, which involves worldly wisdom and human policy, but the Spirit which is of God, which Spirit constitutes its possessor spiritual, and qualifies him to judge all things, while he himself can be judged of no man. See verse 15. Hence Christ said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see." Cannot see what? Man certainly requires no second birth to qualify him to see natural things. What is it then that a man, however wise or learned he may be, cannot see except he be born again? The kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is not visible to unregenerate men, because it is a spiritual kingdom; not composed of flesh and blood, nor meats nor drinks, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. These are things which the apostles preached, and which the carnal or fleshly, or natural mind could not comprehend, as the apostle said: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Finally, the things preached by the apostles embraced the entire gospel of the Redeemer, and nothing else; for a dispensation of the gospel was committed to them, and they shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God. Incomprehensible as the gospel was and is to natural men, it

was understood through the revelation of the Spirit of God, by the apostles, and by the same spirit of truth, which Christ promised to send, to lead his people into all truth; it is measurably understood by every one that has been called of God, quickened and taught by the Spirit, and by no other persons whatever. And all others who may attempt to find out the riddle, will be found among those who are "Ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." If it be demanded of us to tell why the things of the Spirit are concealed from the unregenerate, the answer is found in the words of him who never spake amiss, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

New Vernon, N. Y.,
April 15, 1843.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 255 – 258

I CORINTHIANS II. 13.

(Concluded.)

Second. We notice the manner in which the apostles presented these things in their ministry, 1st, negatively, and 2d, affirmatively. 1st. "Not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth." These words would be without meaning if there were no men attempting to teach the art of preaching. If there were no schools in Paul's day established for the purpose of qualifying pious young men for the ministry, there are many in our day, and since the famous schools of Alexandria, there has been no lack of those hot beds of heresy and priestcraft; but the apostles and ministers of the apostolic order did not avail themselves of any qualifications from them. If our limits would admit, we would dwell largely on the manner of wisdom which man teacheth. First, it is human wisdom, and such as the natural mind of man, with out a knowledge of God, or the things of the Spirit, is susceptible of. Secondly, it is that which God disapproves of, and which, being opposed to the wisdom of God, is foolishness with God. It is that kind of human policy which leads false apostles and graceless ministers to handle the word of God deceitfully, giving flattering titles to men, such as Rev., A. M., and D. D., with such other titles as fashion may render flattering. The words taught by man's wisdom are such as are made use of by those who creep into widows' houses, lead captive silly women; and such as are employed by teachers heaped to their manufacturers, having itching ears, and who preach for filthy lucre's sake. The words of those who bring in damnable heresies – who teach for doctrines the commandments of men; and who for a pretense, make long prayers, influenced by seducing spirits, and preaching the doctrines of devils are words which man's wisdom teaches. Man's wisdom teaches to avoid the offense

of the cross of Christ, lest the ministry be rendered offensive and unpopular; and to study to please the carnal ears, and fed the vanity of carnal hearts at a sacrifice of the truth as it is in Jesus. Man's wisdom teaches the preachers, under its instruction, what manner of doctrines will suit the depraved hearts and vitiated tastes of the children of this world; and those governed by it will never present to their hearers that which will be likely to subject themselves to reproach, persecution or a reduced salary. Man's wisdom has a vocabulary of its own, especially in regard to religious things – words which are capable of a double construction, so that they may be construed in a manner to suit all parties. When worldly men read or recite their sermons, in which they assay to preach and set forth the things spoken by Paul, they are not in the habit of using the plain word *shibboleth*, for they can not frame to pronounce it; but they say *sibboleth*. The pulpits of these diviners never ring with the doctrine of sovereign, effectual, discriminating and irresistible grace; for man's wisdom teaches that the carnal mind of man will not receive it. The total depravity of fallen man – his entire helpless condition – the necessity of quickening grace, eternal love, cleansing blood, justifying righteousness, and a living union to Christ, are parts of speech, for which their grammar lays down but one rule, viz: to avoid them. There is a considerable confusion in the language taught by man's wisdom, such as appeared among the ancient builders of Babel, so that those who are so taught cannot fully comprehend each other – their creeds vary as did the sound of the voices of their brethren, the builders alluded to: but, it is always well understood, however discordant their notes, that they always want bricks or mortar, for their people always "Have a mind to work," not however in building up the waste places of Jerusalem, like Nehemiah and his men, but, like their own type, they build monuments of their own folly. All schemes for proselyting and convert-making by men are productions of man's wisdom; and, the words employed in

that work, whether coaxing, persuading, reasoning, terrifying, threatening or scolding, are taught by that wisdom which is not of God, and which was discarded by the apostles. The wisdom of men, in preaching, leads them to transpose, mutilate and pervert the scriptures – applying the terrors of the law to such as are no more under it; and the consolations, invitations and assurances of the gospel to such as know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. The wisdom of man teaches worldly preachers to discriminate be tween the rich and the Poor, to court the favor of the former, and neglect the latter. As in all the organized societies of false benevolence, goodly seats and flattering titles are provided for and lavished upon the rich, who pay by their tens or hundreds, and some humble place is provided for the poor, who can only ape their wealthy neighbors by handing in their shillings or their dollars. The gospel plan of neither purse nor scrip is quite too antiquated to be taught by man's wisdom.

All those words, maxims, mottoes and sayings which are taught by man's wisdom were laid aside by the apostles and primitive ministers of the gospel of Jesus Christ, lest the faith of their hearers should stand in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God. They denounced the hidden things of dishonesty; they walked not in craftiness, neither handled they the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending them to every man's conscience in the sight of God. This brings us to consider the affirmative proposition, viz: The manner in which they preached these things.

The first important particular in regard to the manner of primitive preaching which we shall notice is, that those whom the Holy Ghost had designated for that work, were determined to know nothing among the churches save Jesus Christ and him crucified. These comprehensive words

comprise all that belongs to the gospel of our salvation. Jesus Christ is the First and the Last, the sum and substance of all that the apostles preached. The Savior, the Anointed, the Hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof; neither is there salvation in any other name. As the Anointed he is lull of grace and truth, anointed of the Father, to preside as head over all things to his church, which is his body and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The anointed Prophet, Priest and King: and him crucified. Christ and the Resurrection. The vicarious sufferings of the Redeemer. His conflict with the powers of darkness. Bis bitter death and his triumphant resurrection and ascension to glory. Justification by his blood and righteousness, deliverance from the law, the curse, and. from all guilt. And all this without anything else to qualify, modify, improve or neutralize it so as to make it palatable to the enemies of the cross. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ and him. Crucified. – 1 Cor. ii. 2. Paul knew nothing among them about Sabbath schools, Bible classes, Tract societies, Missionary boards, Education sermons, or Total Abstinence lectures. It was enough for him to know Jesus, and the gospel of the Redeemer, and he could recognize nothing else as the gospel.

2d. His manner of preaching was in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. If any man had whereof to glory, Paul was not a whit behind him, but he gloried only in the cross of Christ, by which he was crucified to the world, and the world was crucified to him. If this great apostle to the Gentiles felt weak and trembling when he attempted to preach, how ought we to feel when engaged in the same blessed work? Is it becoming in those who attempt to preach Jesus, to glory in their own strength? Are they the ministers of Jesus who manifest nothing of that weakness and fear and trembling of which Paul spake? When we see and hear men who claim to be the successors of Paul, and the servants of Jesus, vaunting of their borrowed plumage, and offering their

prayers and intercession for sinners, and calling them up to anxious benches and altars to receive the benefit of their intercession, can we discover in them anything like the spirit which Paul evinced when he acknowledged he knew not how to pray as he ought, but depended on the Spirit to help his infirmities, and make intercession for him according to the will of God? The truth is, our modern religious stock jobbing revivalists think nothing about conformity, in their prayers, to the mind of God; they desire God to so far change his mind as to adopt their plans, second their motions and grant their petitions. Not so with Paul. He felt his weakness and insufficiency, and cast himself upon the sovereign bounty of his gracious God.

3d. The words in which the apostles spake these things were words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. It is true the apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost, in a manner which is not to be looked for by the ordinary ministers of the same gospel in subsequent ages of time; but it is equally true that all the ministers of Jesus Christ are required to speak in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, although not by special inspiration, as when he spake to our fathers by the prophets, or unto us by the apostles, still the teaching of the Holy Ghost is as indispensably necessary to qualify the ministers of Jesus to preach, as it was to inspire the apostles to write. The Holy Ghost teaches what words are proper in setting forth Jesus Christ and him crucified, first, in the scriptures; secondly, by his indweling power and government, opening to the understanding of his servants the things of the kingdom; leading them into all truth; taking the things of Jesus and showing them unto them; also in giving them a door of utterance. As the husbandman must be partaker of the fruit, so he that laboreth in the vineyard of Christ must have an experimental knowledge of the things which he is required to preach. No one can give evidence that he is called of God to preach who has not learned that the words which the Holy

Ghost teacheth are altogether dissimilar to the words taught by man's wisdom, whether in seminaries or elsewhere. But there is another prominent mark by which to discriminate between the ministers of Jesus, and false apostles; those called of God, as was Aaron, compare spiritual things with spiritual; while those of the opposite class compare spiritual things with temporal or earthly things. The force of this truth may be illustrated in many ways; two or three must, however, for the present suffice. First, the ministers of the Lord Jesus compare the instructions of the Holy Spirit in the scriptures, with the instructions of the same Spirit in the experience of all the saints of God; for the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the scriptures, is copied with infallible accuracy in the experience of all the saints, so far as they are taught by that Spirit. It is true the testimony in the scriptures is more extensive – none of the saints have, as yet, experienced all that is recorded in the word, but they shall eventually experience all; and, as far as they have been led, the hand-writing of the Holy Spirit on the tables of their hearts, is a perfect transcript of the same divine truth as recorded in the scriptures. In this therefore the ministers of Jesus shall be known, and the ministers of Satan detected. The experience of God's children responds to the doctrine taught by the learner; for they compare spiritual things with spiritual. But it is not so with the other description of ministers, whatever may be their show of zeal, professions of love, power of eloquence, or how of tears; they do not, they cannot compare spiritual things with spiritual, for the word of God assures us that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But when they attempt to expound the scriptures, all their imagery is of an earthly kind, being themselves unacquainted with the spirituality of the scriptures, they compare them with things which carnal men can comprehend, as the ancient pagans compared the invisible

God to images made of various material substances. False teachers, thinking that God is altogether such an one as themselves, draw their conclusion that his purposes, plans and arrangements must be such as they would make. The gospel itself, according to their conception of it, is comparable to their own preaching, a mere commodity which may be estimated in dollars and cents, and transported by the cargo to foreign countries according to the amount of capital they can persuade men to invest in the speculation. The christian's experience as by them described amounts to nothing more than every unregenerate man may possess, such as using means within his reach; and heaven itself in their estimation is a place of carnal amusement, consisting principally of flowery fields, pearly gates, golden walks, and the greeting of old acquaintances, and no small part of the joy of that world, by them anticipated, is to consist in robbing God of the glory belonging to him as the only Savior. Every man that has given sixpence into the missionary or tract funds, is taught by them to expect in heaven to meet some soul or souls who shall ascribe to his liberality the efficient cause of saving him or them from hell and bringing them to heaven.

But, again, the ministers of Jesus, speaking the words which they are taught by the Holy Ghost, compare the spirituality of the law of God with the perfect work, righteousness and blood of the Lord Jesus, while those who speak what human wisdom teaches, compare the spirituality of that law with the ability of unregenerate sinners. The ministers or Jesus compare the perfect and complete salvation of all the elect of God with the provisions of grace in the eternal counsel, the blood of Jesus, and the effectual work of the Holy Ghost, while the others regard the work of salvation as being the work of the creature, depending on means, men and money. The preparation of men to preach the everlasting gospel, being a spiritual work, is, by those who have experienced it,

regarded as equal, by just comparison, with those gifts which Jesus their Prince and Savior received for them when he ascended up on high and led captivity captive. But, by the others, all the qualifications necessary for preaching are, that the preacher should possess that kind of religion which all carnal men can possess if they please, feel a love for souls and a great desire to save more than the number which God has ordained to eternal life; a willingness to make a trade of preaching; a theological education obtained by application to the study of words which man's wisdom teaches; a fluency of speech; a gift for begging money; a readiness to hate and persecute, scandalize and culminate the Old School Baptists; strike hands of fellowship with the workmongers of all denominations, take the total abstinence pledge and promise to sustain all the schemes of the clergy. These prerequisites, together with a call, an outfit, a purse and scrip and as many as two coats apiece, &c., &c., embraces what they regard as the most essential qualifications for preaching the gospel.

If any of our readers think our language extravagant or unwarrantable, in regard to worldly preachers, we refer such to the published statements made by themselves in almost every New School or arminian paper published in our country, and to the doctrines preached by them in their pulpits; and, above all, to the fact that they all practice upon the very principles applied to them in this article.

Let then the saints be on their guard – let Zion prepare to try the spirits that are abroad in the world; and if even angels from heaven bring in new doctrines, or such as Paul preached not, let them be accursed. And if there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine (which was preached by the apostles) receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. Beware of men who come unto you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
May 1, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 258 – 266

QUERY

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

In compliance with the request of our highly esteemed brother, Cornelius Myers, of Locktown, N. J., on page 163 of this volume, the following thoughts in connection with the above text are submitted for the consideration of the readers of the SIGNS generally, and of brother Myers especially, in the hope that they may be found consistent with the inspired record and the teaching of the Spirit in the experience of those who love the truth as it is in Jesus.

In writing to the churches as the Holy Spirit moved them, the apostles have given full and perfect instruction to the saints in the sojourn in this world, by which the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. And for this reason the record of inspiration is of incomparable value to those pilgrims and strangers who are called out from the world to be followers of God as dear children. Left to the direction of their own blind reason, they would be sure to wander from the peaceable pathway of righteousness, and involve themselves in error and inconsistency. Often the deceitfulness of sin in the carnal mind causes falsehood to appear like truth, and sin and folly to seem just and wise; or, at most, under the delusive light of natural reason, the broad ways of sin and disobedience seem so nearly parallel with the narrow way of obedience, that the simple and careless are very liable to conclude it is just as well to follow the easy way, which seems right to human judgment, and is adorned with such flowery verdure of ease and self-indulgence, even though the voice of truth within does protest against the departure from the divine commandment. And when once the child of grace begins to confer with fleshly reason on this

matter, suggestions will be abundant to show great advantages in favor of the unlawful course, such as that it is impossible, that the way of obedience is too difficult for one so weak, that failure would certainly result from the effort of such a sinner to obey, and then the precious name of Christ would suffer reproach for the sin. And perhaps the temptation may take the presumptuous form of assuming that if I am one of the elect I shall be saved anyhow; therefore it is better to live in disobedience to the command of the Lord, than to publicly avow my hope in his salvation, and incur the possibility of failure to walk in accordance with such a profession. The clearly implied conclusion from this reasoning is, that the wisdom of finite man is a safer guide than the plain commandment of that God whose strength is manifestly made perfect in weakness.

Other forms of temptation will assail the dear little children of the kingdom of God in the whole of their pilgrimage on earth, but all alluring them to disobey the law of their dear redeeming Lord, either in doubting the truth of his unchanging faithfulness and the sure word of his promise, or in tempting him by willful disobedience to the direction of his spirit, as written in his word, and put into their minds and written in their hearts by his unerring hand. From none of these assaults of the adversary can human reason afford protection. Faith rests along upon the power of almighty grace, the arm of the Lord, who is the Refuge of his saints, their Strength, and a very present help in trouble. While resting here, they are safe from every device of the fowler, who as a roaring lion walks about seeking whom he may devour; and in his search he finds no more easy prey than those self-confident ones who, like Peter, would say, “Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison and to death.” While those trembling little ones, who have no confidence in the flesh, are obliged continually to pray that they may be kept from the evil of the world and from the devices of the

enemy, and even that they may be saved from themselves, yet they are always safe under the protection of that God who will guide them with his eye, who will slumber, and who will turn his hand upon the little ones, for none is able to pluck them out of his hand. The works of the devil cannot effect their ruin, for it was "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Sin cannot involve them in death, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. – 1 John i. 7. Hence, Paul could confidently challenge the enemies of the saints, and declare their safety, as in Romans viii. 33-39: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake ye are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

But, as it is evident that none can "defile the temple of God," as specified in our text, but such as are included in that temple, there must be a sense in which the destruction referred to does come upon such of the subjects of God's grace as are guilty of defiling the holy temple where his honor dwelleth. And this visitation is that fearful thing referred to in Hebrews x. 31: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." – Heb. xii. 6. The infliction of this severe chastening is indeed a

fearful destruction. So Paul enjoins that one in the Corinthian church should be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus; and the same subject of destruction seems to be referred to in his second letter, as a proper subject of love and forgiveness, “lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow.” – 2 Cor. ii. 4-11. And in illustration of this important instruction he gives his own example of carefulness in his deportment, assigning as the reason, “Lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” – 1 Cor. ix. 27. “For if ye [saints beloved of God] live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” – Rom. viii. 13. This death is clearly the destruction of which our text speaks; and in living after the flesh the saints defile the temple of God, both in causing the way of truth to be evil spoken of by reason of their inconsistent conduct, and in destroying their own individual enjoyment by their disorderly walk. The body of the saint, being the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in each of them, it is of the utmost importance that it should be carefully kept from every pollution of the world by which it may be defiled. And this defilement is not limited to such outrageous actions as would be disgraceful in worldly society, or criminal in the light of human law; but the law and example of our Lord Jesus is the perfect standard of holiness which is given as our pattern, and only in strict conformity to this rule can they be holy, faultless and unblamable in his sight. In the judgment of finite minds it may seem that external propriety and circumspect deportment would suffice to justify us; but as all things are naked and opened into the eyes of him with whom we have to do, it is requisite that we be in heart conformed to our perfect example, and hence the necessity of his direction, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.” – Matt. xvi. 24. In denying self the will of self is dethroned, and the will

of God is the supreme director of every desire; and just in exact proportion as they are conformed to the image of Christ in their will and desires, to that exact degree do they experience the answer of a good conscience toward God, and his spirit bearing witness with their spirit that they are the children of God. This assurance is *life*, in contrast with the sorrows of *death*, felt in the absence of this soul-cheering witness.

As has been expressed, the application of the text is to the practical conduct of the subjects of the grace of God. Under the shadowy dispensation of the legal and prophetic night it was said, "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." – Isa. i. 19, 20. The disobedience of the Israelites did not dissolve their natural relation to Abraham, nor could their rebellion annul that covenant which God had confirmed to him. Groaning under Egyptian bondage, or weeping by the rivers of Babylon, they were as much the heirs to that covenant, as when on the banks of the Red Sea the songs of Moses and Miriam proclaimed the glorious triumph of the Lord in the overthrow of their oppressors, or when the gates of Babylon were opened before Cyprus for their deliverance. So in the anti-typical experience of the spiritual Israelites, who are the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise. Though under the chastening hand of their God, they feel the galling yoke of sin, causing them to groan beneath its burden, yet they are not less the heirs of eternal glory than when rejoicing in the liberty of the sons of God. But it is not desirable to feel the rod of chastisement, even though we know it is to produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them that are chastened. While under the rod the feelings of just condemnation causes bittern morning, so that we cry out in anguish, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" In

this darkness and distress we feel that we are indeed destroyed. If in our overwhelming trouble we would call upon the name of the Lord for deliverance, conscious transgression, as a terrible mountain, rises to forbid our approach to the throne of his grace. In willful disobedience how shall we dare to ask deliverance or comfort from the hand of that God against whom we have sinned? And in our extremity of trouble unto whom shall we go? There is none to comfort, none to deliver, but the same precious Lord from whom we have turned away. How fearful it is to feel that the two-edged sword, the word of the Lord, thus destroys us! And how important that we heed the inspired admonition which speaks unto us as unto children, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." Those who have no love to God, and no hunger and thirst after righteousness, may feel authorized to continue in the sin which is their element, presuming upon the abounding grace of God; but those who hate sin, and mourn under its bondage of corruption, long for deliverance, from its heavy yoke, and desire nothing so much as to be holy as their great Redeemer is holy.

As the saints are made to abhor sin in their first experience of exceeding sinfulness, they are not likely to go again willingly into its repulsive service; but it is through its deceitful workings that they are enticed and destroyed as far as their enjoyment of gospel liberty is concerned. So David was destroyed in his great transgression. So Peter felt the painful reproof, when the Lord he loved but turned and looked upon him, and he went out and wept bitterly. And so we all have experienced the fearful efficacy of his word or his eye to destroy us in our departure from his law and in our rebellion against him, causing us to cry in agony, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar! My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace!" – Psalm cxx. 5, 6.

Defiling the temple of God results from the introduction of any unholy thing into that temple. As applied to the church of Christ in her visible organization, it is a defilement to bring in false doctrine, or practices unauthorized by the word of the Lord. These things have no place within this holy temple; for, as in the type, the vessels, furniture and provisions brought into the figurative temple must all be ceremonially holy, so the church of God is holy, and no doctrine or practice must be brought into her courts without the cleansing and sanctifying authority of the word of the Lord. It is not the less a defilement, because the innovation seems harmless or even advantageous in the light of human reason. No other test is applicable here but the just balance of the word of God. Therefore whatever is to be tried must come "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." – Isaiah viii. 20. The established usage of a thousand years weighs nothing here. One word of inspired authority overbalances the opinions and traditions of unnumbered generations. And if any man bring anything into this holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High without divine authority, him shall God destroy. Like the golden wedge and Babylonish garment of Achan, it will prove a trouble to Israel, and a destruction and a curse to him by whom it is introduced. Not that transgression can destroy or forfeit that eternal life which is in Christ Jesus secured against all the effects of sin, but in the individual experience of the transgressor will be suffered the same death declared by Paul as the result of living after the flesh. – Rom. viii. 13. This expression is substantially equivalent to the declaration of our text, yet the context clearly asserts the inseparable unity of the subject of this death with the love of God, which is not in the sinner, but in Christ Jesus our Lord. And this fact is cited as the ground of devotion to things above, and not to things on the earth. – See Col. iii. 1-8.

This view is sustained by the continual experience of all who are led by the spirit of God. Brother Myers will not fail to have realized in his own long experience the inevitable certainty with which this death or destruction has been visited upon him when in minding earthly things, or living after the flesh, he has defiled the holy temple of God in yielding his members servants to the evil that is in the carnal mind. This is the "dry land" in which the rebellious dwell. – Psalm lxviii. 6. How desolate and gloomy the condition to which we are reduced in our sojourn in this land of banishment from the light of the countenance of our redeeming and loving Lord! Here we feel that we are indeed destroyed. If the reader knows nothing of this sore destruction felt in disobedience, he has had a more comfortable experience than ours. But the mercy and grace of our God is magnified, in that hitherto he has never failed to appear for our deliverance to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. How wonderful is the display of the long-suffering goodness of our Lord in forgiving all our iniquities, healing all our diseases, redeeming our life from destruction, and crowning us with loving kindness and tender mercies! Well may we rejoice in his unchanging faithfulness and constant love. Vainly would we attempt to reckon the vast sum of his perpetual mercies and compassionate favors bestowed upon us. Then well may we ask for grace to enable us to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear, for in our own strength we must all feel to ask, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

The holy temple of God forbids the introduction of any doctrine, practice or desire which originates in the corruption of the carnal mind, and that holy temple ye are. Then we cannot overestimate the importance of presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. In doing this, we are not left to rely upon our own strength or wisdom, all our springs are in our Lord

Jesus, in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell. And when we lack wisdom, we need not seek to be supplied from the stores of carnal reason, but "Ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." Guided by that wisdom, we shall never defile the holy temple of God; but turning aside after the wisdom of this world, which is foolishness with God, we shall realize bitterly that even in the prosperity of our folly there is destruction to our comfort and enjoyment. – Prov. i. 32. Then, while receiving all the comfort afforded in the sweet assurance of that immutable counsel of our God, which for our comfort is confirmed by his oath, let none of the children be allured to sin; for in yielding ourselves to such hateful service, we sow to the flesh, and shall certainly of the flesh reap corruption.

When tempted to indulge our carnal inclinations in conforming to the world and its vanities, it will be safe for us to remember the admonition of our text. Called to be saints, shall we yield our members to the degraded service of sin? The indwelling spirit of Christ revolts at the suggestion. The holy temple of God should not be desecrated by the idolatry of such selfish devotion. Those who are consecrated to God by the indwelling of his Holy Spirit should hold their calling infinitely above the things of earth. When we realize the holiness of our calling of God, the highest privileges and honors of earth sink into utter insignificance in comparison with it. And the contemplation of the high favor bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, so far transcends all our powers of comprehension that we are lost in wonder, love and praise. Indeed, we may well say,

"The lustre of so bright a bliss
Our feeble heart o'erbears;
While unbelief almost perverts
The promise into tears."

“Wherefore, gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” – 1 Peter i. 13-16.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 17.
September 1, 1881

I CORINTHIANS 3:10-15.

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by *fire.*"

As an apostle, Paul was a wise master builder; and his gift for the apostleship, and wisdom in establishing the fundamental principles of the gospel among the Gentiles was precisely according to the grace which God had bestowed on him to qualify him for the work. By the infallible inspiration of the Holy Ghost, as an apostle of Christ, he had, in all his apostolic teachings, presented doctrinally and practically, Christ as the only foundation; first, on which the eternal salvation of the church is built up, Christ having obtained eternal redemption for his people. Their deliverance from wrath, from guilt and condemnation, and their full, free and complete justification is all founded on him. Secondly, and in the immediate sense of this text, he has shown that all the doctrine taught, all the works performed, all the hopes inspired, with every theory entertained by the saints, if not founded on him, must come to naught. If our faith should lead us to believe what Christ by his word and Spirit has not taught, it is hay, wood, or stubble, that cannot endure the fiery ordeal that shall try every man's faith. What will it avail for a Christian to persuade himself or others to believe any

proposition which is not founded on truth? For a time the theory may seem plausible, and pass for truth; but when tested by fire, the delusion is exposed, and all the labor and ingenuity that has been employed in its propagation is lost. In building up the saints in their most holy faith, the apostles have testified that unless our faith be in Christ, on Christ, and the faith of the Son of God, it will be consumed in the day of trial. All the works also of the children of God must be wrought in God, and rest on Christ, as our Commander, or they will be burned up. Whatsoever he has not commanded us, he has forbidden. If then we do the works which he has commanded, these works are founded and rest on him; if they do not rest on him, they are without authority or foundation; for other foundation can no man lay; and if without foundation, they cannot stand. Read the concluding paragraph of Christ's sermon on the mount. "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." But quite the reverse is the case of those who hear his words, and do them not. See Matthew 7:24-27. Whatever we may do religiously, if Christ's words have not authorized us, will be labor in vain; unprofitable, and subjecting us to loss.

We have an exemplification of these words of the apostle in the Corinthian church, to whom they were addressed. Paul had been laboring among them, and as a wise masterbuilder had preached Christ to them, as the only foundation. They had accepted his doctrine, discarded their former idolatry, and had in many things walked orderly. By conforming to his laws obediently, they had been building on that foundation, but they had also been building on the same Christian foundation many things for which the apostle reproved them. That which they had done by the authority of Christ was like

gold, silver, and precious stones, which could endure the fire; but what they had done without his authority was like hay, wood, and stubble, all to be burned, and all that labor lost. The churches also of Galatia, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them, had run well, began right, had built on that foundation, gold, silver, and precious stones; but listening to Judaizing teachers, they who had begun in the spirit were so foolish as to suppose they might be made perfect by the flesh; and had been building with hay, wood and stubble. We have numerous examples in the present day. Churches and individuals who have once received Christ as their only foundation have, in some instances, thought they could build faster, and get up their building quicker, and make it much larger, by working in some materials which will make a fair show when there is no fire to try their works. See churches gathering in front-bench converts, suppressing unpopular truth, embracing popular error, and construing their wonderful enlargement as evidence of divine approbation. All seems to go on well until the day of trial comes when their works are tried by fire; then all that have come in by any other way than the door go out without divine favor.

It is hardly to be supposed that there lives a saint on earth who has not, in any way, at any time, been building on this foundation to some extent with hay, wood and stubble. But the admonition is, “Let every man take heed how he buildeth upon this foundation.”

We take the inspired testimony and instructions of the apostles as the basis of our doctrine and practice. They, as wise master workmen, have preached Christ to us as our foundation; on the apostolic platform, or foundation, we go on to build. All our works which are supported by a “Thus saith the Lord,” will stand the fiery test; but all we do without that authority will burn like stubble in the day of trial.

We have reason to fear that many of God’s children have spent years in trying to establish theories and works which shall at last be given to the flames, and they shall suffer loss. But although all the vain works, and unwise, unauthorized building of the children of God shall be consumed, and they shall suffer loss, yet they themselves shall be saved from themselves, from their works, and from their follies; yet so as by fire. He who sitteth as a refiner and purifier of silver, shall consume their dross, burn up their hay, and wood, and stubble, and bring them out of the fiery furnace like gold that is seven times tried in the fire. “Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.”

Middletown. N.Y.
October 1, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 265 – 267

I CORINTHIANS 3:16,17

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."

Among the numerous figures employed in the Scriptures by the Holy Ghost and applied to the church of God, this of the temple of God is of frequent recurrence, and, like all others, is appropriate and full of instruction. The temples in Jerusalem, both the first and the second, were types of the church of the living God, and are applied to her as the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, in which the fullness of the Godhead dwells. The same apostle who wrote our text has shown in Eph. 2:18-20, that all the election of grace, Jews and Gentiles, are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord, a habitation of God through the Spirit. Peter also uses the same figure. (1 Pet. 2:4-7) The history of the building of the temple by Solomon, and also by Zerubbabel, the selection of the materials, the places where they were found, the manner of their being gathered and brought to the building, their preparation for the places which they were ordained to occupy, the perfect harmony in bringing the parts together, the arrangements, consecration and appropriation of the whole, beautifully illustrate the glory of that house whose maker and builder is God. In his application of this figure in the text on which our views are desired, Paul calls our attention to the foundation on which the temple rests, the sanctity of the building as the temple of God, its consecration as the dwelling of God by his Spirit, and the fearful consequence of a desecration of it. The foundation is Jesus Christ, and no other foundation can any man lay. No other foundation can sustain the building. This

foundation is of God, it stands sure, having this seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are his.” He is the foundation and chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord.

This temple of the Lord is holy, for God has consecrated it and set it apart as a habitation of the Spirit; nothing unclean is allowed to enter it. It is a place for worship, a house of prayer. In it God has placed the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, the cherubims of glory, the golden pot of manna, the fruit-bearing rod of the priesthood, the golden candlestick, the shewbread and all the holy furniture belonging to his house. Thither the holy tribes of the Lord go up, and here the God of Israel meets his chosen ones and communes with them over the mercy-seat, between the cherubims. It is no light matter then to defile the temple of the Lord. By reference to the types in the ceremonial law we learn in what manner the sanctuary of the Lord was defiled. See Lev. 15:3 1; 20:3; Num. 19:3; Psalms 79:1; Ezek. 5:11; 7:22; 23:38,39; Zeph. 3:4. Those who defiled the sanctuary of the Lord under the Mosaic law were to be put away from the congregation of the Lord, or put to death, and under the gospel dispensation they are to be destroyed, at least so far as relates to their privileges in the church of God. By a careful reading of the passages referred to above, it will be seen that the Israelites defiled the sanctuary by their own uncleanness, by their contact with things which were unclean, by idolatry, and by a profligate priesthood or ministry. As God’s sanctuary was holy, and the Israelite was required to keep his foot when he went into the house of God, so God’s church, which is his true or antitypical sanctuary, is a holy and consecrated place, and no spiritual Israelite is allowed to defile it by his own inventions, issues, doctrines, plans or works, nor by holding fellowship with things unclean. There must be a coming out from the world, a separation from Antichrist, and a renouncing of false

doctrines, ordinances, and of all religious institutions which are not clearly authorized by the law of Christ. The temple of the Lord is not to be used as a place of merchandise or traffic. When the carnal Jews had made void the law of God by their traditions, they were charged with making God’s house of prayer a den of thieves. Their excuses for thus defiling the temple were as plausible as the excuses made by the Pharisees of modern times. The Jews from distant nations were required to bring their offerings to the temple on certain occasions, and as it was inconvenient to bring their oxen, sheep, lambs, kids and doves so great a distance, the pious Jews and accommodating Levites had conceived the idea of having a stock of offerings on hand, which they could supply to the worshipers for a small percentage, and so make the temple-worship more convenient, and the hardship of complying with the divine command more easy; so a market was established in the temple. And as the money to be put into the Lord’s treasury ought not to bear the superscription of a Roman prince, it was a great accommodation to the pilgrim Jew to find money-brokers in the temple ready to exchange, for a small discount, their incurrent funds, so the tables of the money-changers were allowed a place in the temple also. But all these pious pretenses did not avail them when our Lord entered the temple with a scourge of small cords, and drove the traffickers out, and overturned the tables of the money-changers.

“My Father's house, said he,
was made A place for worship, not for trade;
Then scattering all their gold and brass,
He scourged the merchants from the place.”

Answering well to this figure, in modern times a great amount of religious merchandise is carried on in what is

claimed to be the temple or church of God. Almost everything is offered for a price. Salvation, grace, justification and a passport to heaven are offered conditionally to all who are disposed to make a bid, and memberships, directorships and honorary titles and positions are crowded into the market, while a very brisk trade is carried on in Sabbath Schools, Mission, Tract and Bible Societies, Theological Seminaries and other wares of the kind; all of which, if brought into the temple of the Lord, would defile that holy place. Mystery, Babylon the Great, is described in Revelation 18 as a great market; her merchants drive a heavy and lucrative trade in merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple and silk, and scarlet, and all thyme wood, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men, and of fruits which their souls lusted after. But the value of Zion's commodities is far above rubies; they never were bought nor sold, all are freely given and freely enjoyed by the people of God without money and without price.

But the solemn warning in our text seems to be given to the saints who belong to the building. They are under a solemn charge, lest they should defile the temple or church of the living God; they are not permitted to bring in anything that deffleth; they who bear the vessels of the house of God should have clean hands, and all the members of the church of God are required to put off the shoes from off their feet for the ground on which they stand is holy. They are to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. Their hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with pure water. They are the circumcision who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in

the flesh. They put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and they are called to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God blameless. Such is the high vocation wherewith they are called.

"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." This admonition seems to have reference to their works. Paul says he has laid the foundation, and warns the saints to take heed how they build thereon; for every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire. If any man's works abide (or stand the fiery ordeal) he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire. To attempt then to build on this foundation hay, wood and stubble, is to defile the building; but God will try every man's works by fire, and all that will not stand the test shall be burned, consumed, destroyed. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." Yea, and the prophet says he shall sit as refiner's fire and as fuller's soap, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.

We understand then that God will, by his dealings with his children in Zion, in subjecting them to fiery trials, bringing them through the furnace, burn up all their hay, wood and stubble, and if any are found in the Christian profession who have nothing but hay, wood and stubble, they shall be utterly consumed, according to Malachi 4:1. It shall leave them neither root nor branch. But God's own children, though they suffer loss, so far as their works are concerned, shall themselves be finally saved, yet so as by fire. The discipline of the house of God, the laws of the kingdom of Christ, shall

separate from the communion of the saints those who walk disorderly, and their expulsion from the fellowship of the saints and from the privileges of the church of God, will answer to the figures in the ceremonial law, wherein the offenders were put to death, or separated from the congregation of the Lord. “For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?” There was no evasion of Moses’ law, neither shall the saints evade the law of Christ. He will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; nevertheless his loving-kindness he will not utterly take from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. “My covenant [saith God] will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.” (Psalms 89:34-36)

In conclusion, let us bear in mind the distinguishing grace bestowed on us in assigning to each his place in the house of God, as component parts of the building, as lively stones built up a holy temple in which God has condescended to dwell, and where he has said he will dwell forever, for he has desired it for an habitation. What astonishing dignity has he bestowed on us, how high and holy the calling, how honorable the position! Consecrated and set apart for a habitation of God by his Spirit. With what reverence and godly fear then does it become us to serve him in all things, and let us beware that we defile not the temple of the living God.

Middletown, N.Y.
August 1,1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 386 – 391

I CORINTHIANS 4:15

Brother Beebe: I will renew my request which I made one year ago, for your views on I Corinthians 4:15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *have ye* not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." By complying with this request you will oblige many who are inquiring after the truth, some of whom seem to be entangled with the means doctrine. It is for their sake that I make the request.

James Osburn.
Leesville, Ia.
January 1, 1866.

Reply: Amidst the numerous applications for our views on various passages of the scriptures, we had overlooked the former request of our beloved brother. Even now we may not be able to satisfy the inquirers after truth, much less stop the mouths of gainsayers who pervert the scriptures in vainly assaying to torture them into a seeming support of their delusions; but with such ability as the Lord may give, we will attempt an elucidation of the text.

By instructors in Christ we understand the apostle to mean those teachers m the church which are by the church looked up to for instruction, and are recognized as pastors, teachers, and other gifts designed "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:12-16)." By instructors *in* Christ, we must understand those who are recognized as in his body, which is his church, and of these we are told that Christ, when he ascended up on high, "Gave some apostles; some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." Now all these gifts are employed for the instruction of the saints; to enlighten their understanding, that they may not only enjoy the comfort of a clear understanding of the truth; but be also protected from the slight of men, who, like wily means-users, lie in wait to deceive the saints. Of these gifts the church of Christ may have ten thousand; or whatever number God is pleased to supply, and yet of all these there may be but few possessing the peculiar gift of qualification of fathers, as we will presently attempt to show.

If by *instructors,* we may be allowed to include all the teachers who find their way into the various organized branches of the Christian church, it would swell the disproportion of fathers and instructors to an inconceivable extent, especially in these "last days," wherein many "shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." "For the time will come," (yea, it has already come) "when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (II Timothy 4:2,4)." "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and shall bring upon themselves

swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (II Peter 2:1-3)." Among this description of instructors there are no fathers to be found. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (II Timothy 3:6,7)." This sort has been described by our Lord as coming in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are commanded to beware of them! There are no *fathers* among them; no parental regard for the welfare of the flock, for they are without even natural affections, truce breakers (they will violate their most solemn covenants). They *are false accusers!* Don't forget that this is a prominent trait of the sort spoken of. Moreover, they are *incontinent,* however sanctimonious they may seem to be; for they are slaves to lust. It is also said of this very sort, they are fierce, like tigers howling for blood, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and of the way of peace they are totally ignorant. They are "despisers of those that are good." Traitors, however loyal they may profess to be to earthly powers, to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places to which they have professed allegiance, they are recreant and defiant to those into whose confidence they manage to insinuate themselves by false professions and false pretenses; they are treacherous. "Heady and high minded," are special characteristics of this sort. They assume to know more than seven men who can render a reason, and are wise above what is written, and are of the sort to whom Job, in biting sarcasm, would say, "No doubt ye are the men, and wisdom will die with you." High minded, but not in an honorable sense; but lofty and towering in their vain imagination.

Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Carnal pleasures. Ever ready to sell their professed Lord for less than thirty pieces of silver, and to betray him, his cause, his truth, or his people, with a perfidious kiss. Yet with all these marks branded upon them, like the mark of Cain, they "have a form of godliness." They wear the coat of the sheep, to deceive the flock of God, and to conceal their abominable wickedness. But these painted hypocrites may still be known, notwithstanding their disguise, if their track, especially their back track, be closely examined. Trace these grievous wolves back to their secret lair, and you will find that many a confiding flock has been torn and scattered by them. Wherever they have been entrusted with the pastoral care of the flock, that flock has either been corrupted by them, or it has dwindled away under their instructions. And when detected in their deceitful working, and expelled from fellowship, like the devils of whom we read, when cast out, invariably tear and rend the church or body out of which they are cast. And very generally when so expelled, they find some herd of swine ready to receive and hurry with them away to a swift destruction.

The apostle certainly was aware that such false teachers would infest the church of God; for he found such in the churches of Galatia, and would that they were cut off, for they troubled and bewitched the saints, and he knew full well that after his departure, grievous wolves would come in to the church of Ephesus, not sparing the flock. And with prophetic inspiration he gave warning of their increase in the last days, but still he could only speak of their being in Christ, so far as related to their connection nominally with the church which is his body. They are not in Christ vitally, or experimentally, nor by having entered into his fold by the door of the sheepfold, but as having climbed up some other way, proving that instead of being fathers, they are thieves and robbers, whose work is to steal, to kill, and to devour.

But whether the apostle designed to include these false teachers with the ten thousand instructors in the church whose vital relation to the body of Christ we have no right to question, who while they have gifts which are useful for instruction, are totally destitute of every qualification to be fathers, we will not say.

If we confine the apostle's meaning to those instructors who are divinely qualified with gifts for instructing the saints, and who are and have been useful as instructors, do we now discover many of them who lack the peculiar traits of fathers in Israel? As a prophet of the Lord, Jonah was a qualified instructor, and has given us instruction by the word of the Lord that "Salvation is of the Lord," but Jonah was entirely too impatient, peevish and fretful to discharge the duties of a loving, watchful provident, and careful father. Moses was faithful as a servant, but too austere and severe to feel a fatherly tenderness for erring children. A mere instructor may impress many useful lessons on his pupils with his rod; but parental love and tenderness belong to a father, and the father feels a solicitude for the children which none but fathers can feel. Have we not known in our day preachers who seem to be remarkably apt to teach, almost inspired to dive deep into the sublime mysteries of the gospel, very clear and sound, and edifying in their elucidation of the more obscure portions of the scriptures; who in their every other trait of character were entirely unsuited for a pastoral relation to any particular branch of the church? Indeed it has become proverbial of some instructors, "When in the pulpit, they never ought to go out; and when out they never ought to go in." Their impetuous rashness, imprudent carriage, unbecoming levity, foolish jesting, uncouth extravagance of language, cold unsympathetic treatment of brethren, especially when under trials which require the most careful and tender treatment, carelessness in regard to the discipline and order of the church of God, unexemplary habits, high,

austere, or haughty bearing, rendering themselves unapproachable to the tender timid lambs, or the opposite extreme of low and reckless familiarity and companionship with those who scoff at sacred things. All, or any of these faults tend to disqualify for parental usefulness in the house of God. But few, alas! too few of us who hold a position in the ministry, or otherwise as instructors, can say in truth that our usefulness in our holy calling has not, is not restrained by some or all of these evils. The peculiar qualifications for and characteristics *of fathers* in the house of God will be more fully considered in connection with what we propose to write on the last part of our text: "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel," which, for want of room in this number, we must defer until our next.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 286-290

I CORINTHIANS 4:15

(Concluded)

In resuming our remarks on I Corinthians 4:15, we propose to treat more fully on the affirmative, in regard to the indispensable requisites which constitute relation of position of a father in the church of God, in the sense in which the word is used in our text. As a progenitor, or author of our spiritual life, or rightful claimant of our supreme devotion, filial love, reverential fear, and implicit obedience, the saints of God are forbidden to call any man on earth father: for One is their Father, even God. They are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The life therefore developed in that birth must be ascribed to God alone. But in the illustration of the various gifts which God has given to his church, the apostle has, as he tells us in verse 6 of the same chapter, "In a figure transferred this to himself, and to Apollos." Not to exalt himself or Apollos by an assumption of titles applicable to God; but for the very opposite object. "That ye may learn in us not to think of *men* above that which is written; that no one of you be puffed up for one against another." The apostle in thus transferring the figures employed in this chapter to Apollos as well as to himself, gives us to understand that the term is applicable in the sense in which it is used to other ministers of the gospel besides the apostles, but not properly applied to all instructors, or there would be no disparity between instructors and fathers. We therefore may search for the marks of distinction by which we are to discriminate between those instructors which are, and those who are not fathers.

We infer from the manner in which the apostles John, Peter, Paul and others have used the term, that it is designed not only to signify seniority of membership in the church, but

certain peculiar qualities bearing analogy to the patriarchal or fatherly relation to, and care for, the children.

In our former number we pointed out many of the opposite traits which some instructors have betrayed. We will now attempt to show what are some of the distinguishing qualities or characteristics of fathers in the church of God.

First. Those who from long experience, wholesome training, and spiritual gifts are especially qualified to be useful by their counsels, instructions and examples to the younger and less experienced members in the church.

Second. Those who from long and faithful deportment have secured the well-placed confidence of the saints.

Third. Those who are sound in the faith, and deep in their understanding of the scriptures: orderly in their walk, sober and grave, yet humble and courteous in their deportment.

Fourth. Those who are familiar with the laws and discipline of the church of God; and careful to observe and contend for the order of the house of God.

Fifth. It is highly important that fathers in the church should render themselves perfectly accessible to the veriest babe, the weakest and most trembling child in the church.

Sixth. Those who are qualified to be fathers in the church will show a father's affection, care, solicitude and untiring devotion to the spiritual welfare of all the family.

Seventh. As affectionate and faithful fathers feel a responsibility resting upon them to do all in their power, by diligent and indefatigable labor, or sacrifice of personal ease and comfort, for the benefit and well being of their family, so those who are to be regarded as fathers in the house of God

will show a corresponding devotedness to the best interests of the children of God. Not only to those who have been enabled to come forward and openly profess the religion of Christ, but they will be quick to discover those lambs that may be bleating around the fold, trembling and diffident about making their trials known; giving to such wholesome instruction, comforting words, and fatherly instructions.

But the particular sense in which the apostle in our text claimed to be a father is that he had, in Christ Jesus, begotten them through the gospel. We presume it is on this form of expression that the Arminians and means-advocates cavil, and on which brother Osburn more especially desires our views.

Now the simple question is, in what sense does Paul claim to have begotten the Corinthians through the gospel? If, as Arminian cavilers contend, their regeneration, as subjects of saving grace, was effected by the efforts of Paul in preaching the gospel to them as a means of grace, it must then follow that they were as Christians begotten and born, not of the Spirit, but of Paul, and consequently not the children of God but of Paul; not heirs of God, but heirs of Paul. Very unlike those spoken of in John 1:12,13, to whom God gave power to become the sons of God, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Now let us see the inevitable bearing of this logic. Paul is admitted to be a son of God, for God himself called him when on his way to Damascus, without any intermediate agency. Well now, admitting the Corinthians were begotten by Paul, what is their relation to God? Can it be any nearer than that of grandchildren? If that relation is near enough to suit the means advocates, we are certain that nothing short of the relation of sons of God will suffice to make us joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. But Paul himself

repudiates the absurdity, and denounces the theory as carnal. "For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Appolos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything; neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase (I Corinthians 3:5-7)."

Thus we see that the apostle repudiates the idea of his having power to beget children for the Lord. To be the children of God we must be begotten immediately of God himself, as the scriptures everywhere affirm. It never was so in nature, that one could beget children into a relationship to another: how absurd and ridiculous then to talk of Paul's having begotten the Corinthians into the relation of sons and heirs of God. It is not, it cannot possibly be, that Paul intended to express any such thing. But the question then will return, what did he mean by the words, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel?" The answer, to be in harmony with all that Paul himself has said upon the subject, and all that the scriptures teach, must be that Paul and these Corinthians addressed were in Christ Jesus; not out of him to be brought in by Paul or Apollos, or by anybody else; and in Christ Jesus they sustain certain relations to each other as fellow-members of Christ. The position of Paul in the body, on which he claims the relation of father, is that himself and Apollos were ministers of Christ, called, qualified and sent forth to preach the gospel, and to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that under their divine commission they were the ministers by whom these Corinthians *believed;* not by whom they were redeemed from hell or quickened from death. How did these brethren believe by Paul and Apollos? Let Paul himself explain. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal." How as unto carnal? "Even as

unto babes in Christ." Now, as babes in Christ, they were already begotten and born of God, or they would not have been babes in Christ. "I have fed you with milk," as a nursing father, in adapting his instructions to their weak condition, so that they could understand his language, comprehend his meaning, and digest the food ministered to them. Babes, to be susceptible of food, even of milk, must be living babes. Even milk cannot be fed to the unbegotton or the unborn babes, nor to any but living children. These, being babes in Christ, are babes in life, for Christ is the life of all his children. If they were not alive, feeding them with milk would not make them live; or if they were not babes in Christ they could not possibly be fed with the sincere milk of the word. This Paul has clearly proved in the preceding chapters of this epistle. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." How unnatural it would be for a father to attempt to feed either milk or meat to a dead child, especially when he knew and had declared positively that they could not possibly receive it. But when the children of God are born, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, then, and not until then, can they desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. By the ministry of Paul and Apollos, these brethren had been so instructed and fed, that they had grown and were still growing; and as transferring the figurative language to himself and Apollos, he speaks of having been with them from their early infancy, imparting to them that instruction which their heavenly birth and spiritual life had qualified them to receive with joy, and by which they were through Paul's ministry inducted, or figuratively born into the more full understanding of the gospel; the light and liberty of the children of God, who are taught and instructed by and through the gospel ministry. It was in this sense that Paul called Timothy his son, and the beloved John claimed all the

scattered saints as his little children. In this application of the figure, Paul appealed to the members of the Galatian churches who had received the Spirit, and who had run well, saying, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you, etc. (Galatians 4:19)." If he travailed of them again, he had travailed of them before. As an anxious parent earnestly desiring that they might bear the image of Christ, to which end his former travail and labor had been successful; now that error, in the form of legality, meansism and Arminianism had bewitched them, again he travailed in birth, that their former beauty might be restored, and Christ, not Moses, be formed in them, so that they might again reflect his lovely image.

By his administration of the gospel, which is Christ to them, Christ was reflected or *formed* understandingly in their hearts, so that in the exhibitions of their faith they presented Christ, and not Moses or Old Testament doctrine.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
February 1, 1866.
Editorials Volume 6 - pgs 290-294

I CORINTHIANS 5:4-8.

Dear Elder Beebe: If it is not taxing your time and patience too much, you will confer a favor on me by giving your views on I Corinthians 5:4-8.

Yours in Hope of eternal life,
Mary J. Dinslow.
Bowdoinham, Me.,
December 12, 1866.

Reply: The text submitted is lengthy, and presents a vast field of weighty considerations, involving the order and discipline of a gospel church.

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."

In the preceding verses of this chapter, the apostle calls the attention of the church to a case of disorder, involving not only the guilty party in a wicked course of so great notoriety as to be a common report, but of a magnitude which even the Gentiles would consider degrading and insufferable; but involving, also, gross disorder in the church in neglecting the laws of Christ which he has given for the discipline of the church, by which the offender should have been put away from fellowship. In reproving the delinquency of the church,

the apostle points out the course which the order of the house of God demands, and these special instructions are to be strictly adhered to and complied with in all the churches, and throughout all time. In complying with the request of sister Dinslow, we will briefly notice the indispensable rules for the organization of the church for the transaction of church business.

First. The convocation and all her action should be in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Secondly. The church should be convened, every member, if possible, in his place.

Thirdly. The church has no authority to transact any business relating to the order of the house of God, unless the spirit of Paul pervades the church; and,

Fourthly. The power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the absence of any of these four requisites, no church can be duly organized for administering the laws of the kingdom of Christ.

One. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, is summed up all the right or authority that any assembly or community can possibly have for assuming to be a gospel church. His name is the strong tower of his flock, and the righteous can find safety there, but nowhere else. In his name they have a vital interest. Only in his name can they approach unto God. In his name they are baptized into the one body over which he in all things presides as their head, and on which body and head alone his name is called. And it is in his name, as their *Lord,* their rightful proprietor, their blessed and only potentate, having a full and unreserved dominion over them, they are authorized to assemble and transact the business of his house. Their convocation, and all their actions should be

in his name, as signifying that all is done by, and in obedience to his special and supreme commands. No other authority is sufficient. No king or potentate of earth, no pontiff, cardinal, priest or bishop, can be admitted in his place. Nothing short of "Thus saith the Lord" will be allowed by this apostolic rule. His name alone gives validity to his laws and ordinances, rules and instructions; they are all binding on his disciples, simply because they bear his name, as being enacted by him, and in his name enjoined upon his church. This was the highest, and, indeed, the only authority ever claimed by the apostles of the Lamb. In his name they preached, baptized, wrought miracles, and set all things in order in all the churches. For his name they suffered persecutions and reproaches, and rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name. What authority has any church to labor to reclaim delinquents, or to exclude the incorrigible, aside from that authority which bears his name?

Two. "When ye be gathered together." When the laws of Christ require to be executed in the church, it is required of his disciples to come together for that purpose. No member of the church, unless providentially hindered, has a right to be absent. They are forbidden to forsake the assembling of themselves. The church is required to be gathered together, in the name of Jesus Christ, their Lord, whenever the order of the house of God calls for the assembling of the saints.

Several good reasons may be urged why the church should be convened for the transaction of whatever business Christ has, by his apostles, enjoined. One reason is, because all are alike interested, and equally responsible, according to their ability, for the faithful observance of the laws of Christ, and they cannot shift off their responsibility on others. Much trouble and disorder has been painfully felt when members, instead of assembling with the church for business, have shown a readiness to do their full share in whispering or

openly talking over the affairs of the church in private interviews with one or more of the members; and, in such a clandestine manner, are sometimes very free to give their judgment or decisions in regard to difficulties which concern the church or involve any of her members; and thus bias the minds of others by expressing opinions or convictions in private, which if expressed before the whole church could, if wrong, be easily corrected. The whole wisdom of the church and all her gifts, helps and governments are required, and to secure them all the church must be gathered together. No rule is given by the apostle for the church to act, in such cases as he has named, without coming together. Nor is it enough that the church be assembled, but being gathered, it is important:

Three. To have an evidence that the spirit of Paul is there. "When ye are gathered together, and my spirit." By the spirit of Paul we understand the spirit which God gave to Paul, and to all the other apostles when they were endued with power from on high, as apostles of Christ, to sit on the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost to set all things in order, and to teach us to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded them. But with all their inspiration, they were barbarians to all who were not quickened and led by the same spirit by which they were inspired. The same spirit by which they were inspired to rule in judgment is required to be in us, that we may be profited by their instructions and decisions. Jesus said to them, "When the Son of man shall sit upon his throne, then shall ye also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Our Lord now sits on his throne, and so do also all of his apostles on their thrones of judgment. But the apostles are not now present with us in body, neither is the Son of man any more in the flesh. But as Christ, by his Spirit, is with his church and dwells in every heart, so the apostles are in the spirit of their apostleship

seated in judgment in every apostolic church, where Jesus is honored as King in Zion, filling the throne of his glory. Hence the apostle says, in the third verse of this chapter, "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already." There can no case come up before the church of God which the apostles have not officially already judged, and their decisions could be no more weighty or decisive if they were with us in body. It was not their bodily presence that gave validity to their decisions; but it was the spirit of inspiration which they possessed; and in that spirit they are still in, and compose an important part of, the church of God, the ground and pillar of the truth. A church, therefore, where the spirit of the apostles is not, cannot be an apostolic church, and consequently has no authority to execute any of the laws of the kingdom of our Redeemer.

Four. "With the power of our Lord Jesus Christ." By the *power,* in this, as in many other scriptures, is intended the authoritative power, which embraces all power in heaven and in earth. Having supreme and universal authority in his kingdom, no church which disputes the supreme power and unrestricted authority of our Lord Jesus Christ can be competent to transact any of the business of his kingdom. If any man have not his Spirit, he is none of his; and all who have his Spirit recognize in him all the power and glory of the Father, and by that Spirit they will humbly adopt the language taught by him to his disciples, and with them freely acknowledge to him, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever, and ever. Amen."

A church thus organized is invested to act in the name, and by the authority, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and her acts being performed in his name, in his Spirit, and by his authority, are recognized by him as his acts, and therefore most solemnly binding. But mere decisions by a professed church, carried by

a majority, where this order is not preserved, cannot be so regarded.

Having thus shown, in the case of the Corinthians, what should be the order of the church for the transaction of her legitimate business, the apostle proceeds to instruct them how to proceed, and what to do in the case which was before them. “To deliver such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” Satan is the prince of the power of the air; the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. He is the opposite of the Spirit of truth and holiness, in which all who are born of God are called to walk. As many as are led by the Spirit of God are to be recognized in the church as the sons of God, and as long as they manifest that Spirit they are entitled to the fellowship of the church; but when they depart from the faith by giving heed to seducing spirits, and by adhering to doctrines of devils, that fellowship is to be withdrawn from them. The withdrawing of the fellowship from those who walk disorderly is to deliver them over to the spirit by which they are led. As it was said of Ephriam, when he was joined to idols, “Let him alone,” that he might be filled with his own way. When the church by an act of exclusion relinquishes her authority and watch care of one who has had a standing with her, she formally delivers that person to that society and company of the spirit to which he is inclined. As when the Lord withholds from us his presence, we are for the time left to the buffetings of Satan. It was thus when Peter required to be sifted as wheat; he was for a time delivered over to Satan, to the tempter, and for the same purpose, for the destruction of the flesh: that is, of his fleshly propensity to savor the things which were of men. But the intercession of Christ in his behalf secured for him deliverance, and made his severe trial and sifting in the end a benefit to his brethren. To deliver a refractory or disorderly member unto Satan is simply to give them up to their evil passions, or to

the spirit by which they are led. It is not to cherish bitter or malignant feelings against them, or to indulge in imprecations or maledictions against them, but the ultimate good of the offender is held in view. If he be indeed a child of God, when cast out of the fellowship and communion of the spirits, he will soon, like the poor prodigal, be reduced to severe poverty, and find himself a companion of swine, and in a starving condition. All his substance being wasted, his fleshly confidence destroyed, and his fleshly temper checked and subdued, he will remember his father's house, where there is bread enough and to spare. This result will be in the day of the Lord Jesus. That is when the Lord Jesus shall heal his backslidings, and restore to him the joy of his salvation.

"Your glorying is not good." The manner and circumstances of the glorying of the Corinthians, in the case under consideration, are not stated, only that they were puffed up, and had not rather mourned, that the discipline had not taken its course in putting the offender away from them. And their glorying was not good. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" This figure of the nature and effects of leaven is very appropriate, and full of instruction, and had a powerful bearing on their case. As the nature of leaven is to ferment, expand, and puff up the lump in which it is hidden, so the *old* leaven of malice and wickedness is active and operative in fomenting discord, disorder and confusion when allowed to remain in the church. It should therefore be purged out.

The leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees, which, our Lord said, was hypocrisy, and of which he bade them beware, had the effect to puff them up, to inflate them with pride, and cause them to expand themselves with the most extravagant notions of their own self-importance. If Christians were not liable to this kind of inflation, they would not have been warned to beware of it. Leaven is secret in its workings, but

certain in its operations, and diffusive in its nature; and where it has its course, it will ultimately conform the whole lump to its own nature and quality, so that the whole lump that is leavened, itself becomes leaven of the same kind and quality of that by which it has been leavened.

A Christian, who in his fleshly nature is subject to this fermentation when malice or wickedness is hidden in his mind, comes to think more highly of himself than he ought, and holds depreciating views of others. So also when the leaven of pride, malice or heresy is concealed in a church, its nature is to spread its poison through all the members, and it is certain to do so, unless it be thoroughly purged out. Thus *if* a wicked or malicious person be allowed to remain in the church without reproof, like the one in the Corinthian church, the effect must be like allowing a piece of leaven in a lump of dough, as exemplified in their case, until all the members become "puffed up," as they were.

Now, as the church of Christ is redeemed from the world, and washed, purged and purified, she is to be a new lump, "Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby." Dead to the law by the body of Christ, and married to him that is risen from the dead. Crucified with him, and now quickened and living by the faith of the Son of God. Put off the *old man* with his affections and lusts, and put on the *new man,* which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. With the old leaven purged out, "Ye are now unleavened." And here the apostle reminds us that, "Even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," and urges from that consideration that we shall keep the feast, "not with old leaven," etc. The feast of the Passover was kept by the Hebrews, as God himself ordained, throughout their generations, in commemoration of their redemption from bondage, and deliverance from Egypt,

by the uplifted arm of the Lord, by which he broke their yoke and led them forth in triumph. On that memorable night when God smote the first-born of every family of the Egyptians, the Passover was instituted, and special instruction was given that a lamb of the first year, without blemish, should be slain on the evening of the night of their redemption, its blood sprinkled on the door posts of the dwellings of the Hebrews, and the flesh prepared by fire for the feast, according to the families of the Hebrews. And it was the command of God to them that they should eat the flesh of it on that night, roast with fire, and with unleavened bread, and with bitter herbs they should eat it. (See Exodus 12.) And forever, throughout their generations, they should perpetuate the celebration of that Passover feast annually, in the precise manner and form in which it was instituted. This very expressive ceremony was enjoined, not only as a memorial of their temporal deliverance from the house of bondage and God's judgments executed upon the pride of Egypt, but as typical of Christ our Passover, which was to be sacrificed for us, and our deliverance from the wrath and dominion of the law, and from the guilt and penalty of our transgressions, and also to signify the feast which God has prepared in the gospel for his redeemed. While eating of the gospel feast, God has ordained that his people shall taste the bitter herbs, or the trials and afflictions which, like bitter herbs, are needful to correct and sharpen our appetites for the provisions of his table; that we, on whom the blood of our Passover has been applied as a peaceful sign, shall relish the food, and eat the flesh and drink the blood of him who as our Passover was sacrificed for us.

In eating this Passover, it is most expressly commanded that no leaven shall be allowed even in our dwellings during the seven days of the feast. "Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first

day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel."

Having thus briefly examined the figure referred to by the apostle, let us observe his application of it in admonition to the Corinthians and to the saints in all subsequent ages of the church. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." Christ, the unblemished Lamb of God, the firstling of his flock, the first-born among many brethren, first begotten from the dead, and in all things having the pre-eminence, is the Passover of the spiritual Israel. The consecrated Lamb, whose blood was shed for the remission of our sins, and is applied as a sure token and certain pledge that the angel of divine wrath which shall find out and crush all the adversaries of the Lord, shall pass over us, and shield and protect us from all condemnation. We are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, (every way answering to the figure of the paschal lamb of the Hebrews). Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last days for you who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead and gave him glory, etc. "Christ our Passover was sacrificed," according to the import of the type. And for *us,* for his church, his spiritual Israel, and he the real, and not the lamb in the type, is our Passover, and as such was sacrificed for us. We are therefore to relinquish the type and accept the anti-type, and in coming to the feast which our anti-typical Lamb supplies, purge out the old leaven of Judaism, abandon the types and shadows, and worship God, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. Purging out the old legal leaven, we become a new lump, though we were leavened, yet now the old leaven being purged out, "Ye are unleavened," and

“Therefore let us keep the feast,” the gospel, which is our Passover feast, at which the saints eat abundantly, and drink as Christ’s beloved, and live by faith upon the Son of God.

Old things are now passed away; all things are become new. We are no more under the law, but under grace. The old leaven is purged out. Those who retain the old Jewish, or legal, leaven are cut off from Israel; for they cannot live on their own works and at the same time live by faith upon the Son of God. If it be of works it is no more of grace; and if of grace, it is no more of works. “We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle (Hebrews 13:10).” Banish, then, all workmongrel leaven from your houses, ye blood-sprinkled tribes who come to the gospel feast. Grace, free, sovereign, saving, almighty grace, be your theme, and Christ your Passover be your song.

“Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness.” Can a Christian feed on Jesus, as the bread of life, digest the heavenly food, and enjoy its life-inspiring and heart-cheering power, while cherishing malice and wickedness in his heart? Let Christians answer. The apostle Peter also admonishes the saints to lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies and envies, and all evil speaking. As it requires but little leaven to leaven a whole lump, so a little malice, or envy, or guile, hypocrisy, or evil speaking, will be sufficient, if allowed to be entertained in a church, to diffuse itself until a whole church may be thrown into a state of fermentation and disorder. What can be more unbecoming in the children of God, coming to the Passover feast to feed upon the provisions of the house of God, than to harbor in their breasts a sullen, morose, and malicious feeling towards a brother or sister of the same household, or even towards an alien, or an enemy? Can we ask our Father in heaven to forgive us our trespasses, while we hold a brother who has trespassed

against us by the throat and refuse from our heart to forgive him? We are perfectly certain that with the leaven of malice or wickedness concealed in us, we cannot eat this Passover. Nothing can be more directly calculated to provoke a similar feeling of bitterness in our brethren than for us to indulge in ill feeling towards them, for it works like leaven, secretly producing its malignant effects on those around us. God commands that all this pernicious leaven shall be banished from our dwellings, or the offender who retains it shall be cut off from Israel; he shall not eat the Passover, or feast upon Christ our Passover, or enjoy the melting power of his love in our hearts, unless all this unholy leaven be purged out of us. The love of God shed abroad in us will make us love our brethren and esteem them better than ourselves. Instead of feeling maliciously inclined to injure any one of them, or to speak evil or despairingly of any one of them, we are amazed at the greatness of the grace of God which has given us the privilege to occupy a humble place among those who seem to us as far superior to us in all Christian gifts and virtues.

To enjoy the gospel feast, let us eat it with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. May the God of all grace thoroughly purge out from us all unholy influences, and evermore give us the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, and may we eat and drink abundantly in his kingdom, and go forth and grow up as the calves of the stall.

Middletown, N.Y.
June 1, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 29 – 38

1 COR. VI. 13; HEB. XII. 1; 1 JOHN III. 9.

THE text 1 Cor. vi. 13. The apostle makes use of what seems to have been used in his day as an adage, by which he illustrates the transitory character of natural things, and by a striking contrast sets forth the redemption of the body, which is applicable to the church as the mystical body of Christ or the individual bodies of the saints. Neither the church as a body, nor the individual bodies of the saints, being redeemed from corruption, are to be polluted by unlawful connection with the world. The Corinthian brethren had probably been guilty of applying to the secular powers to adjust matters of aggrievance between them, which, according to the law of Christ, ought to have been settled in the church; and although as a citizen of the world, “All things were lawful” for Paul that were lawful for other citizens of the same commonwealth, “Yet all things were not expedient;” and in his estimation it were better to forego one's privilege than to carry our matters before the unjust for their decision. If as a body the church be married to Christ, it is a breach of chastity for her to appeal to any other Lord: “He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit;” and this separation from the world in our church or religious capacity, is as imperiously demanded as constancy is enjoined by the connubial bands.

Heb. xii. 1. The “cloud of witnesses” in this text, we understand to be the same spoken of by the prophet, “Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain, so the Lord shall make bright clouds.” - Zech. x. 1. In illustrating the nature and the power of faith, the apostle has cited a cloud of testimony in the preceding chapter; in addition to which time would fail him to speak of Gideon, Barak, Sampson, Jepthah, of David also, and of all the prophets. This cloud,

like that which once overshadowed Christ and the two disciples, embodies the law, the prophets and the apostles, with their entire testimony centering in our Lord Jesus Christ, and all producing but the one sound, the voice that came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear ye him. By this same cloud the gospel church is still encompassed about, and upon this glorious reality the apostle predicates his exhortation: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Many speculations have been offered in regard to the weights and besetting sin mentioned in this text; but to our mind the figure taken from the Olympic races is intended to show that under the gospel dispensation the saints are called to run a spiritual race, in order to which it becomes us to cast aside every weight calculated to impede our progress. Coming out from Judaism, these brethren were much encumbered with Jewish traditions and legal ordinances which belonged to the worldly sanctuary of the old covenant; these would be great hinderances to gospel saints, as we see from the account given of the churches at Antioch and Galatia. Of the latter Paul says: "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" The weights by which they were hindered, evidently were those legal rites and ceremonies which belonged to the former dispensation, and which were now abolished and blotted out with the hand-writing of ordinances, which were nailed with the Redeemer to his cross. The apostle says, "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years;" these observances he pronounces *"beggarly elements,"* whereunto they desired again to be in bondage.

In being stripped therefore for their spiritual race, the christian church was required to lay aside every particle of Jewish rites, to touch not, taste not, and handle them not; for as the true substance of what these former ordinances were but the elements or shadows had come, there was no

longer any need of the shadows. These Jewish rites could no longer point forward to a Messiah to come, nor to a spiritual kingdom to be revealed; and as a continued observance of them would imply a still looking for the coming of Messiah and fulfillment of the former promises of his coming, it would of course involve a denial that he had already come. And if Christ had not already come, and become the end of the law for righteousness to all that believe, they were running in vain in regard to gospel ordinances, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.” “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Hence we see the necessity of laying aside the law as a rule of life, being lawfully delivered from its dominion and its curse through the redemption of our Lord Jesus Christ as the apostle testifies, that if under it at all we are bound to continue there, and as to continue in one place would prevent our running a race, we are altogether disqualified for the christian course if loaded down with legal weights and impediments. These weights are spoken of by the inspired apostle as a yoke of bondage, and as a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear; and the apostles considered that it would be tempting God for them to lay that yoke upon the necks of the gospel saints.

It is frequently urged by arminian speakers and writers that we should, as christians, take all these weights along with us; for, say they, if we are not under the law as a rule of life we are at liberty to sin. But they betray a lamentable ignorance both of the law and of the gospel. While the apostle commands that we lay these weights all aside, he commands that we should run the race set before us, (the gospel course) “Looking unto Jesus (not Moses) as the Author and Finisher of our faith.” Our Lord also admonishes his disciples on this subject: “He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looking back, is not fit for the kingdom.” Should

we run the christian race, looking to Moses or his law, we would have to run backwards, and that would disqualify us for the kingdom of the Redeemer.

If a man in ploughing should place his back to the plough, and look back instead of looking forward, he would be likely to make very crooked furrows; so in running the christian race or following the gospel plough, we must look forward unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith. Jesus has gone on before his people, and has commanded his people to follow him; and except they follow him they cannot be his disciples. Who then shall dare to say that in following Jesus we shall be liable to sin? Or that the heaven-born souls, looking unto Jesus and pressing towards the mark for the prize of their high calling, will need Moses with his flaming sword to urge them onward in a different course from any ever taught by him?

When these United States were colonies under the British Government, our citizens could not enjoy a republican form of government, and at the same time maintain a loyalty to the British crown; but when redeemed from the British yoke by the blood of our revolutionary patriots, we as free and independent states had an indisputable right to form our constitution and enjoy our own distinct form of government. So when we were under the law of Moses we were not allowed to claim allegiance to Christ as our King, but were bound to continue or remain in all things written in the book of the law under which we were held in bondage; but when by the obedience and blood of Christ we were delivered from the yoke of bondage, we could, without the charge of rebellion or treason to the old law, bow down to the sceptre of Christ and claim him as our Sovereign and King. In receiving him as our King we receive him as our Law maker, our sole Legislator, and we are, in this relation to him, to regard his law, now written, not on tables of stone, but on

the fleshly tables of our hearts, as the only and infallible rule of our faith and practice. The sin that so easily beset the Hebrew disciples is undoubtedly the sin which doth also easily beset the disciples of Christ at this day. There was with them a lamentable want of faith and confidence in Christ, and a strong propensity to be again in bondage to the law. The apostle marveled that the Galatian brethren, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified among them, were so soon or so easily beset or bewitched with this legal heresy. In order that we then as christians should make good progress in the divine life, we must be stripped for the race, we must lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and look unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith.

The other and last passage proposed by A Stranger, is 1 John iii. 9: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

This passage is in perfect harmony with those on which we have just offered our opinion. The contrast is most strikingly drawn between the condition of those under the law, and those who are born of God. Those Israelites to whom pertained the giving of the law, were Israelites by a corruptible seed, a carnal or fleshly relationship to Abraham’s family, being born in his house, &c., and this seed was not to remain but for a limited period. When the Pharisees came to John’s baptism, pleading that Abraham was their father, they were informed that that seed was no longer valid - that it was corruptible and perishable. And our Lord declared most positively to a ruler of the Jews, “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” “Marvel not that I said unto you, Ye must be born again.” That seed and birth which brought them into

Abraham’s house did not qualify them for membership in a Baptist church, neither did it secure them from sin, death and hell; for by grace publicans and harlots were to be brought into the spiritual kingdom, and of these stones God was able to raise up children to Abraham, while the children of the kingdom, the natural seed of Abraham, were to be cast out. The children of the flesh were not counted for the spiritual seed; but “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” The principal difficulty in understanding this text is the declaration that “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” This has led many to doubt their own experimental knowledge of the new birth; they find so much corruption, depravity and sin in their nature that forbid the thought that they, of all men, are exempt from sin. But let such remember that neither their nature nor their natural bodies are yet born of God. Their bodies are indeed destined to be, when the Spirit of him that brought again from the dead the body of our Lord Jesus, shall also quicken their mortal bodies in the resurrection, then shall they be free from sin in body as well as spirit.

Sin is the transgression of the law, (see verse 4th, same chapter) but whosoever is born of God is redeemed from the law of sin and death. They are not under the law, but under grace. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit; for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. has made them free from the law of sin and death. Being therefore no longer under its dominion, they can no longer transgress the law, and consequently they cannot commit sin. in that sense. Although they can and do transgress the law of the kingdom to which they now belong, they cannot be convicted of guilt or sin by the law from which they are delivered; nor is it necessary, seeing that the law of Christ provides that for the transgression of its precepts the offender shall be beaten with many stripes, and this

chastisement shall be administered in love for their good, but not in wrath, as sin is punished by the law of sin and death.

It is by the implantation of that seed which remaineth that we have the evidence that we are the sons of God; and this seed is life, it is Christ in you the hope of glory; and this. principle of life in us is called the new man, which after God. is created in righteousness and true holiness, and of which the Lord has said, Thou art all fair, my love, I will behold no spot in thee. Although the apostle Paul possessed this abiding seed in him, yet he was constrained to acknowledge that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. He found, as all who are born of God do find, a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin that remained in his carnal members. Hence we hear him saying, "But ourselves also, which have received the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit,* the redemption of our body." - Rom. Viii. 23.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.
Oct. 15, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 2
Pages: 67-73

I CORINTHIANS VI. 19, 20

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

At the special request of sister Permelia Cameron, of Texas, we will give such views as we have on the text written above. There were many points on which the faithful apostle had occasion to admonish the church of God which was at Corinth, who, though recognized by him as the church of God, were located among pagan idolaters and other enemies of the truth. In the enforcement of his admonitions he was inspired to use the most potent arguments and incentives to impress on them the importance of their solemn consecration to Christ as their Redeemer, who had bought them in a redemption purchase with his most precious blood. Whether the apostle, in speaking of their body in the singular number, applies the term to them as a church, or to each individual member severally, in either application his argument is appropriate; but as his address is to the whole church, we think he is speaking of the church as an organized body, and whatever would defile the body of an individual member of the church, would desecrate the church in her organic capacity. The plural form of the pronoun, *ye*, makes the admonition applicable to all the church. *Ye* are not your own; *ye* are bought with a price. A temple is a consecrated place, solemnly set apart from a common to a sacred use, and as such it was applied to the body in which God our Savior in his incarnation appeared, and of which he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," when he spake of the temple of his body. The sacredness of the body in which Christ was put to death and arose from the dead most vividly appears from the testimony, that in it all

the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily, and all his members were and are complete in him. The temple in Jerusalem was a consecrated house of prayer, the sacred place where the children of Israel were to assemble to worship God, and through their high priest to make their offerings to God; and in all their devotions they were to turn their faces towards it when they called on the name of the Lord, thus signifying that the new and living way, and the only way of access to the throne of grace, is through the vail, that is, through the flesh of our Immanuel, for no man can come unto the Father but by him. This is the consecrated way, in which God's chosen people can find grace to help them in time of need.

"Is he a temple? I adore
Th' indwelling majesty and power;
And still to this most holy place
Whene'er I pray I'll turn my face."

The church also, as the body of Christ, is of lively stones built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. – 1 Peter ii. 5. "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, growth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." – Eph. ii. 20-22. In the third chapter of this same epistle to the Corinthians, Paul makes this appeal, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy [consecrated], which temple are ye."

As our Lord Jesus Christ, in his Mediatorial relation to and identity with the eternal Father, and also with the church, which is his body and fullness, is the only consecrated place

in which redeemed and quickened sinners can approach unto God, so is he the sacred temple in which alone they can worship God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. God has made his chosen people accepted *in* the Beloved. God is in Christ in all the refulgent fullness of the members of the body of Christ are in him, according as God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, so they in their vital union, or union of life, are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called; saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. As the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face of Christ, who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, the image of the invisible God, so the Shekinah of his presence covers and fills the church as the temple and dwelling place of the Most High God. God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation: and her saints shall should aloud for joy. There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed. His enemies will I clothe with shame: but upon himself shall his crown flourish." – Psa. cxxxii. 13-18. As the place where God has graciously recorded his name, and where he dwells, is his temple, so the saints also in whom he by his spirit dwells are temples of the Holy Ghost; and in this sense we understand the apostle to speak of the body or bodies of the saints, as temples chosen, redeemed, called, consecrated, sealed and prepared for the indwelling of his spirit. So that in him who is born of God is a spiritual offspring of God, a child of God, a son or daughter of the Lord Almighty, begotten of the Father, born of the Spirit, and is manifestly an heir of God, and joint heir

with Christ; for it is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, nor of a corruptible or perishable seed, but of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and therefore is a new-born child of God, a spiritual and heavenly treasure committed to an earthen vessel. "For God, who commanded the light [or life, for the life that was in Christ was and is the light of men, John i. 4] to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the *knowledge of the glory of God* [which is life, John xvii. 3] in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." 2 Cor. iv. 6,7. These earthen vessels are our mortal bodies, descended from the earthy Adam, formed of the dust of the ground, which sinned and fell in Adam, were redeemed by Christ, before prepared unto glory, washed and sealed with the holy spirit of promise, which dwells in us as a divine treasure, and is an earnest of our spiritual inheritance, which is reserved in heaven for us who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. These bodies we cannot call our own: they were sold under sin; but they are bought with a price, and are called a purchased possession, to be hereafter delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons or children of God. Though now they are mortal, corruptible and vile, they are sealed to the day of deliverance, when they shall be changed from mortal to immortal, from corruptible to incorruptible, from natural to spiritual, and from vile to glorious, and be fashioned like the glorious body of our risen Redeemer. And we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for God has predestinated all whom he foreknew to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. It is strange that any of the children of God should fail to perceive a difference between the vessel and the treasure which it contains: the casket and the precious jewel committed to it.

The vessel is the outer man, the treasure is the inner or new man; and these are contrary one to the other, causing a continual conflict as long as we continue in our militant state.

As the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temples in Jerusalem were the consecrated dwellings of the Shekinah or the presence of the Lord, sanctified as his abode, so the indwelling Godhead of Christ's own supreme deity was manifest in the body of his flesh, as the temple of the living God, and the consecrated sanctuary of his people. And as the vital union of Christ, in his Mediatorial Sonship, with his mystical body the church, identifies them with him, even as he is identified with the Father, so he by his spirit dwells in the church as his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The head of the church is Christ, and the head of Christ is God. Christ is in the Father, and the Father is in Christ, and Christ and the Father are one; even so also the church is in Christ, and Christ is in the church, and Christ and the church are one. As therefore Christ dwells in his church, and all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ, therefore the church is his consecrated temple. And as Christ by his spirit dwells experimentally in each quickened member of his body, and has redeemed their persons with his own precious blood, their bodies were sealed, as we have already shown, with the holy spirit of promise, which makes their bodies consecrated temples, in which his spirit dwells; for they are sanctified by God the Father, and chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. To sanctify is to set apart by solemn consecration to a sacred purpose or calling; so by the redemption in which Christ gave himself for them they are individually and personally, as well as collectively, bought with a price, and are by sacred right the property of him who purchased them with his own blood; and are therefore not their own, nor have they a right to withhold their service

from him whose they are, and whom they are commanded to glorify in their body and in their spirit, which are God's.

How solemn the obligation by which the children of God are bound to honor, obey and glorify God, devoting all the ability he has given them in that direction. To them it is said, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." Our bodies are members of Christ, for he took on him the seed of Abraham; and if we be Christ's, then are we the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to promise. The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same. His taking part of the flesh and blood of which his children are partakers, did not make him the Son of God, for his relation and identity with the Father were from everlasting; neither did his children partaking of flesh and blood make them the children of God, but only developed them as children of the flesh, even as the incarnation of the Son of God, for his relation and identity with the Father were from everlasting; neither did his children partaking of flesh and blood make them the children of God, but only developed them as children of the flesh, even as the incarnation of the Son of God manifested him as the Son of man. Hence, in the body of his flesh he claims his disciples as the bone of his bones and the flesh of his flesh. The bodies of his redeemed people are the members of his body, of which he saith by the mouth of the inspired psalmist, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned [or as in the margin,

what days there should be fashioned], when as yet there was none of them." – Psa. cxxxix. 15,16. The bodies of the saints were all comprehended in the body of the flesh in which Christ came to do the will of the Father, when he took on him the seed of Abraham, and was manifested in our flesh under the law, to redeem us from under the law, that we might receive the adoption for which we are now waiting, and must wait, to wit, the redemption of our body. – Heb. ii. 14,16; Gal. iii. 29; Rom. viii. 23.

By all these considerations the solemn admonitions of the apostle come home to us as the redeemed members of the body of Christ, showing the enormity of sinfulness justly chargeable on those who desecrate the body of which they are members, by asserting an independence or free agency, or by any unhallowed association religiously with idols, or with any other religious body than that of the Lord Jesus. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body; whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many." – 1 Cor. xii. 12-14. May we be divinely preserved from sinning against the body of which the grace of God has made us members, or of defiling the temple which God has consecrated, and in which he dwells by his spirit. "If any man defile [or destroy, as in the margin] the temple of God, him shall God destroy; which temple are ye." How fearful the judgment! and how vigilantly and constantly should we watch and pray, lest we be tempted to bring reproach or dishonor upon the consecrated temple in which the Holy Ghost dwells. The destruction of which the apostle warns us to beware is not the interminable perdition of the ungodly, but that destruction which is parabolically compared to salt that has lost its savor, and is thenceforth good for nothing but to be case out and trodden under foot of

men. Paul says, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.” It is in this sense Christians may be destroyed as to their usefulness in the church, their communion and sweet fellowship with the saints, and enjoyment of the approving smiles of their God. This is indeed a much sorer punishment than Moses ever inflicted on those who despised his precepts, though they died or were put to death without mercy, under two or three witnesses. None but the chastened sons of God can know how sore a plague is sin, and how terrible the strokes of God’s chastising rod.

“To-day, let us hearken to-day
To the voice that now speaks from above,
And all his commandments obey,
For all his commandments are love.
His wrath let us fear to provoke,
To dwell in his favor unite;
His service is freedom, his yoke
Is easy, his burden is light.
But O! of rebellion beware,
Rebellion that hardens the breast,
Lest God in his anger should swear
That we shall not enter his rest.”

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
Volume 48, No. 6
March 15, 1880

I CORINTHIANS 7:5, 14-16.

Dear Brother Beebe: Will you or some of your able correspondents be so kind as to give your views through the "Signs of the Times," on I Corinthians 7:5, 14-16, and much oblige your professed brother,

Wm. Davis.
Lisbon, Ark.
June, 1869.

Reply: Corinth, where this church was located, was one of the most magnificent cities of Greece, and famous for its refinement, literature and wealth, but like all the cities of the Gentile world, at that day, sunk deep in pagan idolatry. Among those pagans there were however, as elsewhere among the Gentiles, many Jewish proselytes long before the gospel was introduced among them or any gospel church organized among them. When the apostles and other primitive preachers of the gospel were driven out of Judea by persecution, they went everywhere preaching the word, and some of them found their way into Corinth; and under their ministry God was pleased to gather and organize a church. The Corinthian constituents of that church having been brought up and educated principally in paganism, and now called to ignore it, were perplexed in regard to the different teachings of the Jews and Christians. The Jews holding that all who embraced Judaism should put away their pagan wives; as in the ritual of Moses it was unlawful for a Jew to have a Gentile or pagan wife. The apostles of Christ had taught those who professed the Christian faith, that they were not by the laws of Christ required to adhere to Jewish rites, but being under law to Christ they were required to regard their marriage most sacredly binding. The Corinthian church, we infer from the context, had written to Paul to

enlighten them on this subject. In reply to their written enquiry, as we understand, the apostle shows that the gospel does not require that the disciples shall be married; and on his own responsibility Paul suggests that the unmarried state would be preferable; but that those who were married, or even betrothed, had no right to disregard their solemn engagements. Parties, either married or betrothed, were no longer independent of each other, and therefore to ignore their solemn pledges, and separate from each other, would be to defraud the forsaken party. This he charges them not to do, except it be with mutual consent for a time, and for devotional purposes, and then to come together again. A Christian husband, having a pagan wife, cannot worship together; and if the pagan desires to go to her idol's temple, and the Christian to the sanctuary of the Lord, let this temporary separation be by mutual consent, and for a limited time. To go beyond this limitation would be fraudulent, for neither the husband nor the wife has *power,* that is proprietorship, or the independent right of his or her own body; for they twain are one. It would be fraudulent, therefore, to desert each other, as it would be to deprive the injured party of his or her lawful rights, and thus would give Satan an advantage and bring dishonor upon the Christian profession. "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, [that is a pagan] and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath a husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." Why? Because they are legally bound to each other. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband." That is, sanctified by espousal and marriage; consecrated, set apart exclusively to and for each other, legally; forsaking all others in that relation till separated by death. Else were your children unclean, or illegitimate, born out of wedlock, and therefore illegal or bastards; but in this marriage consecration or sanctification

they are holy, or lawful children. The Christian husband does not know but that he may convince his pagan wife of the absurdity and abomination of idolatry, nor does the Christian wife know that her pagan husband may not yet become a follower of Christ; hence the impropriety of ignoring the relation of husband and wife, on account of religious differences.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 482 – 484

I CORINTHIANS VII. 14.

ELDER BEEBE: – Will you please give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on 1 Corinthians vii. 14, particularly on the last two clauses?

Yours in hope of eternal life,
WM. CORY
Frankford, Ohio, April 20, 1874.

The text on which our views are solicited reads thus: "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were you children unclean; but now are they holy." The sanctification of a husband by his wife, and of the wife by her husband, refers to the consecration of each to the other by the law of marriage, in and by which the twain become one flesh, each being legally set apart in this relation of husband or wife, the obligation mutually resting on both husband and wife to forsake all others in the marriage relation, and to cleave to each other until separated by death. The husband may be a Pagan, a Jew or an unbeliever, but his religion or infidelity cannot annul or impair the relationship, it is sacred, and must be kept inviolate; or, the wife may be an unbeliever, or of a different religion from that of her husband, but as the relationship of husband and wife is a fleshly relationship, it can no more be affected by their religious faith than the relation of parent and child, or of brother and sister can be affected by what they may believe or practice religiously.

This view of the perpetuity of the marriage obligation is confirmed by the context: "And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife." Also in verse thirty-nine: "The wife is bound

by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord," or only according to the law of the Lord. This shows the sacredness and perpetuity of the relation. The husband and wife may live apart from each other by mutual consent for a season, or as long as they live, if they can live more happily apart, which is undoubtedly sometimes the ease, but neither the consent of the parties nor any divorcement can give either the right to marry to another party while the other is living. So much for the sacredness of the marriage covenant, by which each is sanctified, or legally set apart to the other. Read also Romans vii. 1-3: "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." "Else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." If children are born of adultery, then are they unclean, illegitimate or bastards. The sacredness of the marriage consecration affects the legitimacy of the children. The uncleanness of the children does not relate to any distinction between even bastards and children, as fallen sinners against God, or the depravity of their fleshly nature, but it relates to their being born out of wedlock, and therefore not legally known as children of heirs. "But now are they holy." Holiness here simply means lawful, legitimate, perfect in relationship, as being born in wedlock. In their earthly nature, and as sinners against God, or as transgressors of the law of God, they are as unholy as all others of their race. Things under the law were ceremonially holy when legally sanctified or set apart to a consecrated use, and things are legally holy when strictly in conformity to

law, and in this case it is very clear that the apostle applies the word “holy” as meaning lawful, and perfect in the relation of children, and in contrast with what they would be if their parents were not sanctified by the consecration of a lawful marriage.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.,
June 15, 1871

Republished – Signs of the Times
Volume 84, No. 14.
July 15, 1916.

I CORINTHIANS VII. 16

“For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?”

This epistle was written at a time of great affliction, distress and persecution, not only at Jerusalem, but also in the churches which were among the Gentile, every inch of the ground occupied by the church of God was contested by the Jews, and also by the Pagans, and to add to the general distress, many false notions and corruptions had obtained among the members of the churches, as will be seen by carefully reading this epistle. Among other points on which the Corinthian saints required apostolic instruction, was that in regard to their relationship with this world, as husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, servants, espoused virgins, &c. The question seems to have been agitated among them, as to whether their calling of God, their spiritual birth which developed a new and spiritual relationship to the members of the kingdom of Christ, was to dissolve those earthly relations which previously were binding on them. The apostle very clearly shows that as the kingdom of Christ is spiritual and not of this world, it intermeddles not with the civil, social or political organizations which legitimately existed before the setting up of his kingdom in her gospel organization. On this important subject the apostle says, “Let every man abide in the same calling, wherein he was called.” That is, he is to remain in the vocation which he was in when, and previously to his calling. He continues; “Art thou called, being a servant? [for there were very many of the primitive saints, who were held as the servants and chattel property of men,] care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s free man: likewise

also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant." Therefore he enjoins with apostolic authority that every man shall abide in that relationship that he was in when called. A husband being called by grace, and his wife continuing in unbelief, a Jewish proselyte, or a Pagan worshiper, affords no reason why he should leave her, or if the wife be called, and her husband, still remaining in unbelief, gives her no liberty to leave him, nor does it in the least degree lessen her duties to him as a faithful and affectionate wife. "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife;" that is set apart legally, by marriage. "Else were your children unclean," or illegitimate; "but now are they holy," or lawful.

If the husband or wife, who have become disciples of Christ, should be forsaken on that account by their unbelieving partners, it is not their fault. If the unbelieving party will depart on that account, let him or her, as the case may be, depart, but let the forsaken party not marry again, for the marriage cannot be dissolved only by death, so as to give the surviving party liberty to marry again. "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace." Here the text on which our views are solicited, comes in: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?" How save them? By a reconciliation. In verse 10, of this chapter, Paul says: "Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband." By reconciliation with him, she retains or saves him. And however indignant, unreasonable, tyrannical, malicious or persecuting he may be in resenting her conversion to the christian faith and practice, although he may forsake her, yet she must not marry again, while he is living, for she does not

know but that she may save him, by a mutual reconciliation; and the same with the husband.

The salvation here intended is not a deliverance from the curse of the law, or from the retributions of the world to come, because Christ is in that respect the only Savior, and there is salvation in no other, but the saving or retaining of the affections and companionship of a husband, or of a wife by reconciliation, is evidently what is intended in our text.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 56 - 58

I CORINTHIANS 8:5,6

“For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth (as there be gods many, and lords many), but to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him (I Corinthians 8:5,6).”

Admitting all that can be claimed by principalities and powers, either in heaven or earth, to us, that is to those who are the called, quickened, and spiritually instructed, there is but one supreme ruling power, transcending all the powers which are put under him. He is the only wise God, our Savior. His name is called THE WORD OF GOD. All the powers in heaven acknowledge his majesty, and all the angels of God are commanded to worship him. The four beasts (or living creatures), and the four-and-twenty elders, which represent all the principalities and powers in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, acknowledge him to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. And he himself declares his supreme power over all flesh, which he must needs possess, that he might give eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him. When by a commission from him, his apostles were seated upon thrones of judgment, to judge and administer to the twelve tribes of his spiritual Israel, and the keys of the kingdom of heaven (that is the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, with which they were baptized on the day of Pentecost), was given them, expressly to make binding on earth, all their apostolic decisions, they were distinctly informed that the excellency of all this power was of God, and not of them. “He came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me, in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen (Matthew 28:18-20).”

In asserting the absolute supremacy of our Lord Jesus Christ over all beings, all events, and all worlds, we design in this article to show that in ascending his Mediatorial throne, all temporal as well as all spiritual authority was vested in him. The apostle in showing what is the exceeding greatness of God’s mighty power to his church-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, adds: “And hath put all things under his feet,” and in all this fullness of power over all things in heaven and earth, in this world and that which is to come, “gave him to be the head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all (Ephesians 1:19-23).” We will notice first his supreme power in the heavenly places, and secondly, his supreme authority over all the principalities or departments of power in this world.

First. Christ is supreme, blessed and only Potentate in his spiritual kingdom, the departments of which are called Heavenly Places, wherein are set thrones of judgment; the thrones of the house of David (Psalm 122:5). There are no thrones of legislation: for not even the apostles were allowed to enact any law, or amend, annual, or altar any part of the law of Christ. His princes shall sit in judgment. They shall sit in judgment over his chosen tribes, giving judgment and decision on every part of the law of Christ, and their judgments and decisions are authoritative, for they sit on thrones, and thrones signify places of imperial power. Thus in

setting forth the principalities of the heavenly places, the apostles are first brought to view, endowed with power from heaven to administer the laws of Christ, to set in order all that belongs to the organization and travel of the church of God. What they have written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost makes up a full, perfect, and complete directory for the observance of all the children of God throughout all time. The man of God is perfectly and thoroughly furnished to every good work. The primitive church was organized on and in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and only so far and so long as we abide in the doctrine of the apostles, can we continue in their fellowship. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaven; also, what they have loosed on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Next to the apostles in authority are the prophets which God has placed in the church, having gifts from the Lord for the edification of the saints. Thirdly, teachers, in a more general acceptation of the word, as this principality embraces, as we apprehend, all the gifts, or all those to whom God has given ability to teach the doctrine, order, and ordinances of the house of God. The same gifts which are simply called *teachers* in I Corinthians 12:28, are in Ephesians 4, called evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Next to these in their order come the gifts of healing, of helps, governments, tongues, etc., and all for the edifying of the body, the church. None of them are to be despised or unappreciated, for these all being established as principalities in the heavenly places of the church and kingdom of Christ are to be regarded as thrones of power which Christ himself has set. They are to teach, exhort, reprove, and rebuke with all authority. That is with all the authority by Christ invested in them, and that is to be determined by his word. These principalities cannot be disregarded without violation of our loyalty to Christ; for he has said to his servants, "He that receiveth you receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me

(Matthew 10:20).” The Pharisees were astonished at Christ’s doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes; and it is a distinguishing mark of a servant of Christ now, that they, and only they, have divine authority for what they teach. Jesus said to Nicodemus, “We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.” But we should remember that it is only when the servants of God speak as the Lord Jesus has authorized them, that they speak or teach with authority. Now all these principalities and powers which Christ our King has set in the heavenly places of his kingdom are in subjection to Christ as the Blessed and only Potentate. He is exalted not only above, but far above all principality and power, and every name that is named, both in this world, and that which is to come. They are only his servants, acting by his authority, having none of their own. He is the Head, and they the members of his body: and to him they constantly ascribe all power, might, and dominion; saying, “for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever, amen.”

Should any one therefore attempt to introduce into the kingdom, or to bind any obligations upon the saints which our Lord Jesus Christ has not authorized, whatever their position may be in the church or in the ministry, their effort should be firmly resisted. Even the apostles are to be followed only as they follow Christ. And if Paul or an angel from heaven should teach any other doctrine than that which the apostles have preached, let them be accursed. To hold Christ as the blessed and only Potentate will not allow us to receive from any of his servants, or professed servants, aught in doctrine or order that does not bear the broad seal of his Holy Spirit. All the power or authority any of his apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers can have, or that the children have a right to regard or obey is the power and authority of Christ himself, as he is the only, as he is the Blessed Potentate. And it would be treasonable in

any of his subjects to bow to any other sovereign or potentate in his kingdom.

Secondly. The principalities and powers of the earth, as well as all those of the heavenly places, are subordinate to him, whose name and titles are written upon his vesture and upon his thigh; King of kings, and Lord of lords. The boundaries of his government in providence are from the rivers to the ends of the earth. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and all legitimate powers, governments, thrones, and dominions of or over the tribes of mankind are from him; and no power can be exercised over men except by usurpation that comes not from him. He as God of the whole earth has instituted human governments, set up kings, governors, rulers, and judges, limiting their rights to govern within such bounds as to be a terror only to evil-doers, and a praise to them that do well. Paul gives this as the reason why every soul shall be subject to the higher powers; for there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. This applies alike to all degrees of power or authority, by special ordinance of God, whether it be vested in kings, governors, presidents, judges, husbands, parents, masters, or wherever it exists, and for the limitation, regulation, and duration, Christians are to examine the ordinance of God in which all these several powers are authorized. The powers are widely different in degrees; the parent or the master has not the power which God has given to kings; but their respective powers to the extent provided in the ordinance is as legitimate in the one as in any of the other departments of human power, and in every case Christians are to respect all these powers and authorities, simply because God has ordained them; not because one man of himself has more right to rule than another. The Christian is to “honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honor the king,” upon the very same principle that servants are commanded to

obey or be subject to their masters with all fear, because it is God's ordinance, and our obedience as children, as servants, and as citizens of states and nations, is, so far as Christians are concerned, that thereby we honor and obey God.

This motive for the submission and obedience of every soul to the higher powers or authorities is urged alike in regard to every grade or degree of authority which God has ordained and enjoined. Children are exhorted to obey their parents, because God has commanded it. It is the first commandment with promise. Servants are commanded to obey in all things their master according to the flesh; "not with eye service," as though it were only from fear of man; "as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; and to do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men (Colossians 3:22,23)." Obedience to kings, governors, judges and magistrates is by special command of our blessed and only Potentate, to be faithfully rendered, because God has commanded it. Not merely because men have enacted the laws, or kings have decreed them, with pains and penalties, but in the fear of God and in obedience to him. "For rulers are not a terror to good works." That is those whom God has invested with power, and who are his ministers to us for good. The extent of all power given of God to rule is that they shall be a terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well. They are ministers of God, in the civil department of his government, to protect the law-abiding in all their rights, and to punish those who infringe upon the lawful rights of others; hence the power to be recognized by Christians, although ministered by rulers and judges divinely appointed, is none the less the government of our Blessed and Only Potentate. And all kings, governors, and rulers of the earth, are as firmly bound to rule in the fear of God, observing the limitation of all their powers, as their subjects are to obey them, as the ministers whom God has put in authority over us.

A careful examination will show every candid and honest enquirer after truth that the obligations of subordination, submission and obedience, enjoined on Christians to all the principalities of the heavenly places; that is in the church of God; and their obligations to obey all men who are divinely invested with authority over us in the flesh, as kings, rulers, parents, husbands, masters, and all other institutions of power, to the full extent of the power thus given to them over us, rests alike upon the recognition of the divine power. They should be cheerfully rendered in obedience to our Blessed and Only Potentate, as unto God, and not unto men. It is then as disloyal to our Potentate as for a child to dishonor or disobey his parent, a servant to dishonor or disobey the lawful commands of his master, as it is for a citizen to disregard, dishonor, or disobey the wholesome laws of the state or nation where he owes his obedience.

No man on earth is invested by any ordinance of God with unlimited power or authority. Some have indeed usurped and exercised such power for a season, making the monarch’s will the supreme law. Such were the pretensions of the haughty king of Babylon, when commanding all his subjects to worship his golden image; but God rebuked him, and drove him from the society of men to eat grass with the beasts of the field till he confessed the supremacy of the God who rules over all. No earthly government has any divine right to judge the saints in religious matters; nor has any saint a right to be judged by them in meats, or drinks, or holy days, new moons, or Sabbaths. Nor has any husband a right to dictate the religious faith of his wife; nor has a parent a right to command his child to disobey the laws of God or men; nor has the owner or master of a servant a right to require of him anything that God has forbidden, or that would be in violation of the legitimate laws of the land.

In this view of the subject, we bow our knee, and swear allegiance to our Blessed and Only Potentate, as the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and whatsoever we do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men (Colossians 3:23)."

"All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tongue
On this terrestrial ball,
To him all majesty ascribe,
And crown him Lord of all."

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 237 - 243

I CORINTHIANS VIII. 11.

“And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?”

We should bear in mind “that the church of God which was at Corinth,” was composed principally of Gentile converts, who were situated in the very midst of pagan idolatry, and as the members of the church had been pagans from their infancy, until they were called by grace to a knowledge of the true God, it was as natural for them to retain some pagan notions, which they had received by tradition, as it was for the Hebrew converts to retain some improper views concerning the abolished rites and ceremonies of the old covenant dispensation. One prevalent rite among pagans, as this chapter shows, was to make sacrifices of animals to their gods, of whom they had a vast number, and after sacrificing the life of their victims to their gods, the bodies of the sacrificed offerings were eaten in the temples, in honor of the idols to whom they had been offered, or taken away to the shambles, or market, and sold. The pagans seem to have supposed that the offering of their victims to their idols constituted their flesh holy or sacred, and that meats thus consecrated would impart to them a holiness, or make them better. A difficulty had evidently existed among christians in the Corinthian church in regard to the propriety or impropriety of eating things which had been offered in sacrifices to idols, and to settle the question, they had appealed to Paul, as one of the judges which occupied the twelve thrones of judgment, judging the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel, and his instructions in this chapter are in reply to their inquiries. In these instructions he refers them to what they, or some of them, knew, namely: that an idol was nothing in the world: that is that it had no power, no divinity, and that it could not impart to the things offered to it

either purity or impurity; it could neither make the meats offered better nor worse. Hence he says in chapter x. 25, “Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, [or market,] that eat, asking no questions for conscience’ sake.” “But if any man say unto you, This is offered unto idols, eat not, for his sake that showed it,” &c. For he assures them that “Neither if we eat are we the better; neither if we eat not are we the worse.” Simply the eating of meats which had been offered in sacrifice to idols, in itself considered, could neither make them better nor worse, because having a knowledge that the idol was nothing, they could eat that which had been offered as though it had not been offered, without defiling their conscience. Nevertheless, this liberty is not to be abused. There were those in the church for whom Christ died, who were weak, and who had not this knowledge, and were unable to discriminate between eating to express faith in or devotion to the idol, and the eating from the consideration that the earth and the fullness thereof is the Lord’s, and that an idol is nothing. In such a case, therefore, for the sake of the conscience of the weak brother, which is liable to be defiled, from lack of knowledge to discriminate, he admonishes his brethren to forego the privilege of eating, and assures them that he would not, while the world stands, eat meat, or gratify his carnal appetite at the expense of the peace of Zion, or if it should cause his brother to offend. The weaker brother was liable to offend in such a case, in a variety of ways, by being grieved at what he, from want of clearer knowledge, supposed to be idolatry, or by imitation of the stronger and more enlightened brother, he, in eating, would actually commit idolatry; in either or any case his conscience would be defiled. Therefore, the knowledge of the one is made a snare to the other. And through thy knowledge, (that the idol is nothing, and that the meat is not at all affected by having been offered,) shall the weak brother (the brother who has not this knowledge or discernment) perish? The word perish, in this case, does not

mean to perish eternally, for Christ has said, “And they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” - John x. 28. But Paul is particular in explaining what he means by perishing, in this case, namely: their conscience would be defiled, and they made to offend. None for whom Christ died can fail of eternal salvation, for he has redeemed them unto God with his blood, and made them priests and kings, and they shall reign with him forever; but they may be defiled in regard to their consciences, while here in the flesh.

The term perish, according to our standard lexicons, has among other significations, the following: “to wither, to decay to waste away, to be in a state of decay, or passing away, to come to nothing, to be wasted or rendered useless, as Jer. ix. 9, to be injured or tormented, as 1 Cor. viii. 10.,’ And the term is sometimes used to signify final and everlasting destruction, as in 2 Peter ii. 12, not as in John x. 28. The sense in which it is used in our text, cannot possibly mean to be lost eternally, or it would directly contradict the solemn affirmation of Christ, in John x. 28. But it is used as in the case of the prodigal, “I perish with hunger.” - Luke xv. 17: to signify suffering, distress, &c., as also in the case of the disciples, Matthew viii. 25, “Lord, save us: we perish.” Weaker brethren are not to be damned for the selfishness, unkindness, or knowledge of their brethren, for they are saved with an everlasting salvation, by the blood of Christ, and they shall not come into condemnation, but have passed from death unto life. Still, although their final destiny is irrevocably fixed, they may perish as to their comfort, enjoyments and usefulness, in the sense intended in our text. By the unkind and selfish conduct of their stronger and better informed brethren, they may be led into difficulties, and through their knowledge, which, in the absence of charity, puffeth up, the weak brother’s conscience may be wounded, and he left to suffer, pine away, wither, waste

away, or be rendered useless, in regard to his gifts or place in the church.

By comparing the instructions given to the Corinthians, in this case by Paul, with those given by the convention at Jerusalem, to the church at Antioch, (Acts xv. 29,) we see why it seemed good to the council at Jerusalem to enjoin on the saints at Antioch, as necessary things, that they among other things should abstain from meats offered to idols. The necessity did not arise from any effect the idol could have on the meats, or any impurity in the meats themselves, nor even in the eating them, when they could be eaten with the proper discernment, but it was necessary on the ground that weak brethren might be involved in difficulties.

Without pursuing this subject farther by way of elucidation of the subject of meats offered to idols, let us draw from this the lesson of admonition which it suggests to the saints of the present day. The law of Christ, which is binding on all his disciples, requires them to bear one another’s burdens, and especially that the strong shall bear the infirmities of the weak. The apostle reminds his brethren that the weak ones of the flock were of sufficient consequence in the divine estimation, to be redeemed by the blood of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has loved them and given himself for them, they are therefore those, weak, feeble and ignorant as they may be, for whom Christ died. And if Christ has so loved, as to give himself for them in common with all of his redeemed, will not the same love of God shed abroad in our hearts, incline us to sacrifice the gratifications of the flesh, rather than lay a stumbling-block in their way? Can that love of God which was stronger than death, if it be in us, fail to constrain us, like Paul to forego our own personal gratifications, even in those things which may be otherwise harmless in themselves, though it were to deny our carnal appetites what they crave, rather than disturb the peace of the church of

God, or bring distress upon any of those for whom Christ died? We may have knowledge, and if we have, we have cause of gratitude to God for it, but let us not forget that knowledge of itself when alone, puffeth up, and unless tempered with charity, it will be sure to puff us up; but charity is profitable in all things. And if we have all knowledge so that we can understand all mysteries, and speak with the eloquence of men and angels, if we have not charity, we are nothing; mere sounding brass and tinkling cymbals. Having then all knowledge to know that all things are lawful to us, may we have charity, or love to those for whom Christ died, to remind us that all lawful things are not expedient, and we are admonished to "take heed lest by any means this liberty of ours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak." We may not now be exposed to the temptation of eating meats which have literally been offered to idols, as were those brethren in the primitive age, but are there not many things now existing among and around us, to which this same rule is equally applicable? What is the difference whether it be by our eating meat, or by any other personal indulgence, if the consequence is to cause our weak brother, or brethren, to stumble or to offend? If we love the saints, which we certainly do if the love of God dwells in us, let us bear in mind that it is not good to eat meat, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby a weak brother for whom Christ died will be made to offend. How important then that all the saints should not only shun what they know to be positive evils, but every appearance of evil. Things which may not, according to our knowledge, involve positive wickedness, yet may have the effect to bring positive reproach on the cause, and to inflict a wound on those who being weak, and having tender consciences, be made to suffer, and in that sense perish. For instance: A brother who is well established in the truth, may go into some of the idol temples, with which our country abounds at this day, and witness the ceremonies and exercises practiced by carnal

religionists, without being in apparent danger of contamination, but a weaker brother, by the example, may be emboldened to go, and not being so well fortified, may be tempted to mingle with the adversaries of truth and righteousness, for want of discernment to discriminate, and thereby he may be defiled.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 15, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 363 - 367

I CORINTHIANS IX. 14.

Elder Beebe: Please give your views on 1 Cor. ix. 14: "Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I want your views particularly on the ordination of God relative to the Lord's preachers living by the gospel. I presume you believe that what God has ordained comes to pass; if so, why is it that the Old School Baptist preachers generally get little or nothing of a temporal support? Are they not called to preach? or does the ordination of God fail? By attending to the above request you will much oblige an inquirer after truth,

ISOM CRANFILL.

Reply: The word "ordain," like many other words in our vocabulary, is used to express more than one idea. Sometimes it is used in the Scriptures to express the determined counsel or decree of God, as in Eph. ii. 10. Sometimes it is applied to the setting apart of elders, pastors or apostles to the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them, &c.; but in the text under consideration, it is, as we understand it, intended to signify that the Lord had instituted or commanded that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel, just as he ordained, instituted or commanded in the ceremonial law, that they which minister about holy things, should live of the things of the temple, and they which waited at the altar should be partakers with the altars. Even so has he given commandment concerning his gospel ministers, who devote themselves to that work, that they shall be sustained by the brethren. They sow to the brethren spiritual things, and receive from them of their carnal things.

But like all the other commands of Christ, this is sometimes disobeyed, and for this very reason the apostle admonished the church in regard to it. Inasmuch as Christ our King has

ordained or enacted this as a law or precept, and made it binding, it should be solemnly regarded by all his loyal subjects.

We certainly believe that the firm decrees of the throne of God shall all be fulfilled. What he predestinates must surely come to pass. As many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And Christ was ordained before the foundation of the world as a Lamb slain for them who, by him, do believe in God, &c. But when the word is used in reference to his laws and ordinances in the church, it does not express what he has promised himself to accomplish, but what he has enjoined on his saints to do in obedience to his commands.

We certainly believe that Old School Baptist preachers are called to preach, for they are the only class of preachers under heaven that we know anything about who do preach the gospel of Christ, but why they, or any of them, fail to receive an adequate support, would be as difficult for us as for brother Cranfill to tell. In some instances it may be that they are located among brethren that are poor, and unable to be as liberal as they wish, and in some cases it may result from a reprehensible negligence, or disregard for the laws of Christ.

But it is possible that the ministers themselves are in fault. When Jesus sent out the seventy as lambs among wolves, he allowed them not to take purse or scrip with them. They were to rest solely on the indemnity of his name, and leave the whole matter of their support to him, and they returned, and reported that they had lacked nothing. Christ’s ministers are still required to go in his name, and to rely on his power and providence to sustain them, and if in doing so they lack anything, let them report the matter to him.

Some of our preachers have in protesting against making a trade of divinity, or merchandise of the gospel, been understood to hold that it is wrong for ministers to be supported by the liberality of the saints, and to denounce those who are so sustained, as hirelings. Others again have, by an overreaching greediness of filthy lucre, by storming, scolding, fretting and complaining of the meanness and covetousness of their brethren, disheartened them. The most liberal hearted christians are, probably, as a general thing, those who are the best fed. But there can be no reasonable doubt that too little regard is paid to the authority of Christ by the churches in regard to the obligation laid on them to communicate to the support of those who labor in word and doctrine among them.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 265 - 266

I CORINTHIANS 9:27

"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

The above named Scripture is frequently referred to by those work-mongers who deny the efficiency of the grace of God to secure the eternal salvation of those on whom it is bestowed, with a manifest design to make the impression that the apostle Paul taught the doctrine of falling from grace. Infidels themselves in regard to the testimony of God on that subject, they desire to strengthen their skepticism by dragging the inspired apostle into their company. They would make it appear, if possible, that the same Paul who had so constantly and persistently contended that salvation was by grace alone, who declared to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that it was by grace they were saved, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast; and who elsewhere contended that if salvation were of grace it could not be by works; and if by works it could not be by grace; and who positively and emphatically declared that it was not of works, but that it was by grace, and grace alone; that this same Paul was, after all, a poor, blind Arminian, and did hold that Christians were liable to fall from grace and be damned if they trusted alone in the grace of God for their salvation. Well did this apostle anticipate their infidelity, their cunning craftiness, and their handling the word of God deceitfully, when he charged them with turning the truth of God into a lie. This they do when they make the Scriptures say what they never said, and testify the opposite of what they have always testified. But it is only necessary to examine attentively, candidly what the apostle and all other inspired writers have said, to expose the deception of those God-

defying skeptics who lie in wait to deceive. Those base deceivers would represent that the works of men are more effectual in securing salvation than the grace of God; for they represent that men may be the subjects of grace, have the grace of God in their hearts, feel its power to the extent that Paul had felt it when God himself had told Paul personally, "My grace is sufficient for thee," and afterwards that grace prove insufficient, they fall from it and perish forever, and that the works of men are more reliable than the Savior's blood and righteousness; that they may be of the number for whom Christ shed his blood, to whom God has imputed his righteousness without works, and yet if they fail to secure their salvation by their own willing and doing, they will be lost, notwithstanding the grace of God and the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said by the grace of God he was what he was; but they would make him say by his own works he was what he was.

In urging on the Corinthian saints that they should abstain from idolatry and carnal lusts, that they might thereby enjoy the fellowship and communion of all who were of the household of God, he in the commencement of this chapter adverts to his own standing and experience. Of his standing in the house of God, he says, "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen the Lord?" etc. His standing was such as could not be questioned as a child of God, an heir of immortality and an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, yet with all this array of incontestable evidence in his favor, to enjoy the confidence and fellowship of his brethren he had to keep under his body and to bring it into subjection. Keep his body under what? Bring it into subjection to what? He has informed us that with his mind he served the law of God, but with his flesh, or body, the law of sin. He found another law, that is, another from the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus. This other law in his members, namely, the members of his body, bringing him into captivity to the law of

sin which was in his members, for in his flesh dwelt no good thing. He had a continual warfare between the flesh and Spirit. When absent from the body he was present with the Lord, and when at home in the body he was absent from the Lord. The body naturally struggling for the ascendancy in the conflict, but the Spirit warring against the flesh, suppressed the corruptions of the body and kept it under, and in subjection to the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness. But why this conflict? Not to save his soul from hell; that salvation was already accomplished, and the assurance given him by the seal of God himself. Why then did he struggle with the corruptions of his flesh? Ah, if he had been an Arminian perhaps he would not, for they have often said if they were only sure that they would be saved at last, they would give a loose rein to all their wicked propensities; they would steal, murder and commit all manner of wickedness, and take their fill of sin. Well, they can never have that assurance until they are born of God, and if they are ever born of God they will never use such language, for they will then find in them a principle which aspires after holiness and struggles against the lusts of the flesh.

But the question is, In what sense Paul, after preaching to others, could himself be a castaway? We understand him to mean in regard to his usefulness to the saints as a minister of Christ unto them. He tells us in this chapter of his labors and sacrifices in the work of the ministry for the sake of the saints. He had waived his right to be supported by his brethren, and had accommodated himself to the condition and capacity of Jews and Gentiles, to the strong and to the weak, that his labors might be beneficial to them. In all his labors and sacrifices he had conferred not with flesh and blood, he had not pursued a course gratifying to the body, but in fastings oft, in afflictions, stripes and imprisonments oft, he had kept his body under and brought it into

subjection, that his ministry might be useful to the saints. Suppose that Paul, while preaching the truth to the people, had indulged the unhallowed propensities of his depraved nature, mingling with scoffers, in rioting, drunkenness, fighting, or in any manner unbecoming his high and holy calling, would not such indulgence of the flesh have lowered him in the esteem and fellowship of his brethren? We have some painful examples of those who preach good, sound Bible doctrine, but their conduct out of the pulpit is such as contradicts the spirit of the truth which they proclaim. We have heard it said of some that when in the pulpit they never ought to go out, and when out they never ought to be allowed to go in. Christ compares his ministers to salt, but he says, If the salt have lost its savor, it is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out, or cast away, and trodden under foot of men. When cast away from the fellowship and confidence of the saints their preaching cannot be edifying, and if cast out, the world has no use for them, and they are trodden under foot of men.

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 362 – 365

I CORINTHIANS X. 13.

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

We have no special light to impart on the above text, beyond the plain and obvious import of the words in which it is presented, when taken in their connection with the epistle, and the common experience of the children of God, while here in the flesh. From the many disorders which Paul had occasion to reprove in the Corinthian church, it is very evident that the members thereof had not escaped a liberal share of temptations. Temptations arising from their own carnal nature, from the world and from their adversary, the devil, had been many, and quite apparent among them, and they, perhaps, like many a tempted, tried saint of God at this day, may have been ready to conclude that no real christian could be so tempted, or so frequently overcome by temptation as they were, and that if they were what they professed to be, they would not be so tempted. Temptations to do wrong, to please the flesh, and grieve the spirit, which in the saints is born of the Spirit, or to murmur or to fail to appreciate the mercies of our God, are of themselves very trying to God’s people, but how greatly is the trial aggravated when the cruel tempter insinuates that these temptations are evidences that we are not the children of God, or that God will leave us in the power of the tempter, and that we shall never be released from them, that in judgment against us, the way of deliverance shall be closed, and we must perish. To meet and silence all these suggestions, the inspired apostle cheers us with the blessed declarations of the text, which, in its obvious sense, presents the following assurances, viz:

1st. Our case is not as it has appeared to us, peculiar or uncommon, all the saints are subject to the very same, and it cannot by any righteous inference be construed that we are the less interested in the saving grace of God because we are so sorely tempted.

2d. Our faithful God has his eye in love and compassion on us while we are tempted. However unfaithful we have proven ourselves to be to God, God is faithful, and his faithfulness is as enduring as his throne. He will never leave thee nor forsake thee. "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Our God who has promised all this is faithful, and he will certainly accomplish all that he has promised, and make you more than conquerors through him that hath loved you and given himself for you.

3d. The cheering truth is implied in the text that all the temptations which have overtaken us are working for our good and God's glory; for he is as able, were it for the best, to secure us from the power of temptations, as to make a way for our escape from them, when we have felt sufficiently their power. Our gracious Redeemer, our faithful High Priest, was tempted in all points as we are. Yes, in *all points!* Think of that, thou tried and tempest-tossed child. There is not a point in which it is possible for thee to feel the tempter's power, but what the blessed Savior has felt in his own person, when here in the flesh, and he therefore knoweth how to succor thee when thou art tempted. In all thy affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved thee: in his love and in his pity he redeemed thee, and he carried thee, and bore thee all the days of old.

4th. The text assures us that neither the world, the flesh or the devil, has power to tempt a child of God only by the permission of God himself. The exact amount of our temptations, their number, weight, measure, severity and duration, are dependent on his permission. God's government extends to devils as well as to men, to sin as well as holiness, and none can go beyond the limits which his decree has fixed, to annoy or tempt his children.

"Pains and death around thee fly;
Till he bids thou canst not die;
Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

Neither tribulation, nor distress, nor angels, nor life, nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present nor to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because they lack the disposition to do so, but because the God of unbounded power, love and wisdom, will not suffer it. God will indeed, and does suffer his children to be tempted, but not to an unlimited extent. Satan went as far in tempting Job as God would suffer him, but he could go no further. He had no power to drown even the swine, without the express permission of our Lord. A sparrow cannot fall, nor even a hair of our head, without an order from the throne of God.

Our text also suggests to our minds the order and exact equality of God's ways. When he issues the permissive order for a saint to be tempted, he metes out the exact amount of grace required to sustain that saint, and bear him safely through the trial. The tempter cannot be in advance of God's faithful providence; with the temptation, the way of escape is made. Pharaoh with all his mighty army could by no possibility reach the encampment of Israel at the Red Sea

before the Lord was there in his cloud to make a way for their escape across the channel of the deep. The three Hebrews could not be cast into the burning furnace until the form of the fourth, whose form was like the Son of God, was there to protect them and make a way for their escape, nor could Daniel reach the bottom of the den until God's angel had been sent to shut the mouths of the lions. God is never behind time in the protection of his children; he will help Zion, and that right early.

6th. On these glorious promises the apostle predicates the admonition, "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry." Why should we bow to any other god, or look to men, or angels, or to our own wisdom or works for protection or deliverance, and thus depart from the Lord our God? To distrust him, is in itself idolatry. Let us own no other god, trust in no other power or wisdom, but rely alone on his faithfulness.

7th. Patience, in tribulation, is taught. Our Father and our God is at the helm. Though fiercely beats the storm, the tempest, though our foundering bark begins to sink, though the surging billows roll, and all the elements be fearfully charged with flashing thunder bolts of wrath, what of all this? Can nature lashed to fury transcend his power, or go beyond his firm decree? He who taketh up the islands as a very little thing, who toucheth the mountains and they smoke, rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency upon the sky,

"He that can dash whole worlds to death,
Or make them when he please;
He speaks, and his almighty breath
Fulfills his great decrees."

"Then let the loudest storms arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies;
No fatal shipwreck need we fear,
But all our treasures with us bear."

Then count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, for they are appointed for good, and when sufficiently tried, all the dear, tried saints shall come forth from the furnace, like gold seven times tried in the fire; and remember that although sorrow may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 461 – 464

I CORINTHIANS 15:5

“And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve.”

A friend has desired us to explain how Christ was seen of the twelve, after his resurrection, seeing that the time which seems to be referred to was after the apostasy of Judas, and before Matthias or Paul were numbered with the apostles. We have had very little reflection on this subject; nor does it appear to us to be a matter of much importance, any farther than it may involve the accuracy of the apostle’s statement in chronicling a matter of history. The vitally important fact of the resurrection of the crucified body of Christ from the dead was what the apostle was laboring to establish beyond all reasonable controversy, by testimony of the most convincing kind. Peter, who is called Cephas, had actually seen him in his resurrected body from his crucifixion, and after that he appeared to the disciples on the evening of the first day, and again after eight days, when Thomas was present. But at that time the literal number of the apostles present was eleven. Still we know that the apostles were very frequently called, *The Twelve,* as a name by which the apostles were designated from other disciples. Whether Paul here used the word *twelve* as a *proper noun,* or name, signifying, *The Apostles* without reference to the number literally which were then and there present, or not, is of no very great importance to us, seeing that we know that subsequently to the time referred to when Cephas first saw him, after his resurrection, he was really seen by all the apostles, including Paul himself; as he says in the eighth verse, “And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.” Hence, all the twelve apostles were qualified as competent witnesses, for they all had ocular demonstration that he was risen indeed. As the great theme of their preaching was Christ and the resurrection, they were to speak that which

they knew to be true, and to testify that which they had seen; so that every one of them had a personal knowledge of his resurrection, as they all had seen him from his resurrection, in his risen body. And although Paul was as one born out of due time, yet not too late to see the risen Redeemer.

Middletown, N.Y.,
June 1,1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 200 - 201

I CORINTHIANS 15:24-28

(Reply to Sister Brown)

"Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

This argument is used by the inspired apostle in proof of the doctrine of the final resurrection of the saints. Until the resurrection of the saints, death holds dominion over their mortal bodies. Death reigned from Adam to Moses and continues to reign, and is the last enemy that shall be destroyed. When Adam followed his wife into the transgression, by his offence sin entered into the world and death by sin. And death passed, at that early period, upon all men, for all had sinned, as all were in Adam, and all were Adam, for the Lord God called their name Adam, in the day when they were created. (Gen. 5:2) Before Adam was multiplied, before Eve was revealed from his side, before son or daughter was born, in the day of creation God called their name Adam; and their name, so far as their earthly existence is concerned, is still Adam. Therefore death still reigns by one Adam, and all things cannot be put under Christ, in the sense of this text, until death is destroyed, subdued, and put under him by the resurrection.

Hence Christ, by his spirit which inspired the prophets, said of his people, "I will ransom them from death: O death, I will be thy plague, O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." (Hos. 13:14) Again it is testified of him by the same spirit, "He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces;" etc. (Isa. 25:8) And this Mediatorial triumph of the Son of God cannot be fully consummated while death holds dominion over the bodies of those whom he has ransomed from the power of the grave. And as his Mediatorial reign by the irrevocable decree of God, even the Father, is immutably extended, 'Till he hath put all things under him;" so the final resurrection of all the saints is most conclusively demonstrated, and a denial of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints is regarded by the apostle as equivalent to a denial of the Mediatorial conquest and glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has already ransomed them from the power of the grave, having paid the ransom price, and he holds that power in his own hands, as he said to John, "Fear not: I am the First and Last: I am he that liveth, and was dead: and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." (Rev. 1:17,18) Having the keys of death and the grave he has the power to open, and none can shut; to shut, and none can open. Thus the apostle has shown that the resurrection of the saints at the last day is indispensable to the complete triumph of the Son of God, and that his triumph shall be consummated and his Mediatorial work finished when death, which is the last enemy, shall be subdued by the resurrection of the bodies of his saints. "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." He is the firstborn from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept; and God "hath begotten us [the saints] again, to a lively [or a vital] hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not

away," etc. (I Peter 1:3,4) "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you. (Rom. 8:11)

"Then cometh the end." The end of what? The end which Jehovah declared from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 66:10) The full and complete accomplishment of the Mediatorial work of our Redeemer cometh to an end; the design of God; for the word is used in scripture to signify God's purpose or design. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job and have seen the end of the Lord." (James 5:11) The end also of all the trials, tribulations and tears of the saints. The end of their sighing, sorrowing, and sinning; the end of all their association with corruption, depravity and earth. But above all, in the immediate sense of this subject, the finishing stroke of his Mediatorial work which was given him to do. He has himself declared, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:37,44) Then the resurrection of that the Father gave him - that the Father hath drawn to him - shall be the consummation of his Mediatorial work.

"When he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father." His mediatorial commission embraced the redemption of his people out of all the families of the earth unto God, and he has redeemed them unto God with his blood; but he was also commissioned to bring him "many sons unto glory." (Heb. 2:10) To wash, cleanse, sanctify and purify them, and raise them up and present them in his own image before God, without spot or blemish, "according as God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before

him in love.” As a kingdom that is fully organized; the King of Righteousness upon the throne, reigning in righteousness, sitting upon his holy hill Zion, with all his subjects, regenerated, initiated and recognized as his subjects; his law written in their hearts, his image indelibly enstamped on them, his spirit within them, and his glory bestowed upon them. In all the fulness of the measure of the stature of Christ shall he deliver them up to God, even the Father.

“When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.” As Daniel described this kingdom, which the God of heaven has set up, as breaking in pieces all other kingdoms, and that it should survive them all and stand forever, so all other governments must terminate with the elements of nature, all things must be subdued to him, and even the rule of sin and reign of death, as well as all humanly organized governments must be abolished, and pass, before the kingdom shall be delivered to the Father. Even, ‘The last enemy shall be destroyed, which is death.” How perfect and complete will be his victory; not a single enemy left living in the field, not a single fort or piece of artillery remaining to be used against the King or his subjects; all things subdued and put under his feet! This is virtually done already. “For he hath put all things under his feet.” The word has gone from the mouth of God in righteousness, and shall not return void of that whereunto he hath sent it. All things, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones or dominions, things visible or invisible, all, all are put under him. Hell is subdued, death abolished, sin from all the saints annihilated, and Christ is triumphant over all things, with all the trophies of his deathless victory, in full command of earth and heaven, shall ascend and bear all his redeemed sons to the mansions of his Father’s house prepared for them from the foundation of the world. And with divine authority shall he command the avenues of immortal glory. “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors, and the King of

glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah."(Psa. 24:7-10)

"Ye everlasting doors open wide,
Lift up, ye gates, receive my bride;
While heavenly harps proclaim aloud,
Here comes the purchase of my blood."

We now approach, with much fear and trembling, that part of our subject on which sister Brown more especially desires to be enlightened; which she supposes may be very plain and simple to us, but dark to her. On this very subject great and wise men have differed widely; and we presume there is not a subject in the wide range of divine revelation on which theologians have been so sensitive. In their discussions more angry passions have been stirred up than on any other point; and rivers of blood have been shed in the abominable controversies, and all without producing one spark of light, or making the least approximation toward a settlement of the points in dispute.

We will not attempt to settle or review the positions occupied by Trinitarians, Unitarians, Arians, Socinians and Seballians, or others who have distinguished themselves by their masterly efforts to secure the mastery; but simply give sister Brown and our readers generally the limited views which we have, making no pretension to infallibility, or even desiring that our views shall be regarded with the least favor, any farther than they shall be found clearly sustained by the infallible record which God has given of his Son.

We view the subject thus - First: That all the fulness of the Godhead is embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ. That there is not an attribute or perfection belonging to the Father, or to the Holy Ghost that does not belong to Christ. That in the absence of one such attribute or perfection, all the fulness of the Godhead would not so dwell in Christ. If he were not absolutely and to the fullest extent of the word God, we could not scripturally rely on him as our Savior; for he has said, I am God, and beside me there is no Savior. Nor could we worship him without involving the sin of idolatry; for he has said that he will have no other God before him, and has forbidden us to worship any other God. We therefore believe he is the true God and eternal Life; the only wise God our Savior.

We believe that he is not only God in the most absolute sense of the word, but he also is the Man whose name is THE BRANCH, who shall be a priest upon his throne, etc., according to Zechariah 6:12,13; that he is the Man of God's right hand and the Son of Man, whose God has made strong for himself, according to Psalms 80:17.

And we also firmly believe that he is "The Mediator between God and men; the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time," according to I Timothy 2:5,6.

As God, he is one and identical with the Father, and embodies all the fulness of eternal Godhead. As the Man of God's right hand, and as he is called the Man Christ Jesus, and the Man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; he existed in this manhood with his Father from everlasting; not in a fleshly nature, until he came in the flesh, but in the perfect and complete manhood indicated in the declarations of scripture referred to; and which we clearly infer from the divine testimony that Man was created in his image and likeness,

and that Adam is the figure of him that was to come. As the Man Christ Jesus, he embodied, and from everlasting did embody, his church, which is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all, according to Eph. 1:23. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." (I Cor. 12:12) "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourished and cherished it, even as the Lord the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." (Eph. 5:29,30,32) 'There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling." "And he gave some apostles," etc. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the BODY OF CHRIST. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:4,11,12,13) This one body, this perfect man, this full stature of the measure of Christ, refers to what we call the mystical stature, man or body, and in its full measurement presents Christ as the Head, and the church as his body, flesh and bones, and all the saints as members of this body, in this Christ, in this perfect Man, in this measured stature of the fulness of Christ, as we have seen that the church is his body, and the fulness of him that filleth all in all; that is, the church is the fulness of the stature, of the members, to set forth a perfect man.

That all these members which make up the fulness of the stature of Christ were in him before the foundation of the world is proved in Eph. 1:4, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." And that they were and are in him as the fullness of his body and members is equally clear from the whole tenor of Paul's arguments throughout his epistle to the Ephesians. This is what we call eternal vital union of Christ and the church; and upon this

union rests the eternal salvation of all who are or ever can be saved.

Now as we have proved from I Tim. 2:5, Christ is not only God and Man, but he is also the one and only Mediator between God and men. We do not controvert the testimony that Christ has come in the flesh; but we contend that he was Christ, or the Anointed One before he came in the flesh. That he was made of a woman, made flesh, and dwelt among us is clearly true, and that the fleshly body in which he came was made of the seed of David after the flesh, is equally true. In his flesh he took part of the same flesh that his members are partakers of is admitted; but that he was the Man Christ Jesus before he came in the flesh is what we contend earnestly for.

But as the one Mediator we are now to consider him. “Now a mediator is not the mediator of one, but God is one.” (Gal. 3:20) Where then is the other party? God is One, and the church is one. And Christ is the one and only Mediator between them, equally representing both parties; identified alike with both. He is one with the Father, in the Godhead, and one with the church as his body, and fulness of him. The fulness of the Godhead is in Christ, and Christ in all his eternal fulness is in the church. He is one with his body, the church, even as he and his Father are one. The head of the church is Christ, as the Head of Christ is God. Therefore as a Daysman he can lay his hands on both, and is every part perfectly qualified to mediate between the parties. As one in identity with the church, he could come in the flesh and be recognized by law and justice as the responsible head over all things to his church, and in the body of his flesh which he took on him for the suffering of death, could bear their sins in his own body on the cross. For them he could fulfill the law, perfectly obey all its precepts, bear its weighty penalty, put away effectually and for ever all the sins of that body,

wash and cleanse and purify it in the fountain of his blood, and make peace by the blood of his cross, and thereby reconcile us unto God. While in his identity with his Father he could sustain all the honors of the eternal throne, and had power to lay down his life and to take it up again. His official titles as Prophet, Priest, and King, all belong to his Mediatorial relation to God and to the church.

Having thus defined our views of Christ as God, Man, and Mediator between God and men, we are better prepared to tell what is our understanding of the Son's becoming subject to the Father. 'Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." The Son in this place means the Mediator - the Head of the church, the body; and when all the saints shall be conformed to the image of this Son, he will be still identified with them, as the First Born among many brethren; but will no longer be required to mediate between them and God. No man can come unto God but by him; but when he shall have delivered up the kingdom unto God, even the Father, the whole body or church of the First Born will be prepared to see without a glass between the full-orbed glory of the eternal Deity. The eternal deity of Christ will not be eclipsed, restricted, or abridged; for God will be all in all, while Christ as the First Born will bring all his members to his own standard of glory; for the glory which God has given him, he has given to them, and in his Godhead he will be glorified with the Father's own self, with the glory of uncreated and eternal deity, and all that Christ has assumed in his espousal of his church will continue to be identified with that church, to beautify and glorify her forevermore. The glorified humanity of the Son of God, though transcendently radiant, will be clearly distinguished from his own eternal Godhead. Now we approach and draw nigh unto God by the new and living way which he has consecrated through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; but the veil will then no longer intervene.

With Job, we shall then see God, and our eyes shall behold him in his supreme excellency, while the Son, that is, in his members, his body, shall be subject to Him who has exalted them, and God will be all in all.

To imagine for a moment that the eternal deity of Christ, abstractly considered, could be placed in subordination to any higher power would be to doubt his absolute deity, or at least his equality with that higher power. But we know that Christ, in his Mediatorial identity, came into the world, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him. This subordination to the Godhead is only apparent in his form of a servant which he took on him. But having accomplished the work which his Father gave him to do, he has sat down with his Father on the eternal throne. That same glory he had with the Father before the world began, and that glory he shall still have with the Father when the world shallbe no more. We cannot divide the glory of Christ and the glory of the Father. They are one in the Godhead, and it is one undivided glory beaming forever from that one God who is all in all. But we feel our utter incompetency to dwell upon a subject so sublime and infinite, and better prepared to unite with the humbled poet and confess,

"With feeble light, and half obscure,
We mortals thy arrangements view;
Not knowing that the least are sure,
And the mysterious just and true.

My favored soul shall meekly learn
To lay her reason at thy throne;
Too weak thy secrets to discern -
I'll trust thee for my guide alone."

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 179 - 188

2 CORINTHIANS II. 15, 16.

"For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other savor of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things?"

The term "savor," signifies literally, anything that affects the organs of taste or smell; a sweet savor, is that which has a pleasant odor or taste. The incense and perfumed offerings which were made under the law, were to signify such offerings as are acceptable to God, and things with which God is well pleased; and in this sense we understand it is used by the apostle in our text. In the preceding verse Paul says, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place: for we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ," &c. As the members of Christ, as his apostles, standing in him, by whom the savor of his knowledge is made known in every place, the apostles, their gifts and labors in the gospel, are well pleasing to God, not only in the effect produced on them that are saved, but also on them that perish. In drawing the line between the living and the dead, in feeding, comforting and building up the saints, and in exposing the hidden things of dishonesty, they draw down on themselves the wrath and persecution of the enemies of God and truth. So that in every place where they were called to labor, whether men would hear or forbear to hear, whether sinners were converted to God, or enraged by the testimony, in all cases God caused them to triumph, or made their ministry effectual, either by bringing to light those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, or in exposing those who were those who were of the opposite character; in no cases were their labors in vain in the Lord. "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ." There

was nothing in even the apostles, which was well pleasing unto God but what was of Christ. They, in themselves, were by nature children of wrath even as others, hence all that they possessed as the children of God, disciples of Christ, or apostles of the Lamb, was of Christ, and the savor of that treasure which was committed to them, as unto earthen vessels, was a savor of Christ unto God. Their election, their calling, their qualifications for the ministry, and their administrations, were acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ.

"*To the one we are the savor of death unto death.*" That is to the one class, for they are presented in our subject as two classes, them that are saved, and them that perish. To the latter class, the apostle says we are the savor of life unto life. But how are we to understand this declaration? Does he mean that the preaching of the gospel is to them who perish the cause of their damnation, or of their perishing? That the gospel proposes to them terms, conditions, and proffers, and their rejection of them, or failure to comply with them, is the cause of their eternal death? Certainly not, for such is not the truth. Neither the gospel itself, nor the preaching of the gospel, can possibly injure any one. The gospel has no more power to damn, than the law has to justify and save. Condemnation and wrath is by the law, justification and immortality is by the gospel. The law is the administration of death, but the gospel administers life only to them that are saved, for those unto whom this life is administered cannot perish. Christ has said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hands. How then, are these apostles the savor of death unto death in them that perish? We understand the matter thus. To them that are dead in trespasses and sins, the preaching of the gospel only comes in the letter, or external sound of it; it falls upon their deaf ears as a dead letter; it has no life in it to them, inasmuch as they being dead, cannot receive it in its spirit and life. Take a bird from the open air, and confine it

in water, as its nature is not adapted to the water, this element is death to the bird, but it is life to the fish. But the water, although adapted to the nature of the living fish, can administer no life to the dead fish. So the preaching of the apostles was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness. The word can only come to the dead, in the oldness of the letter, and not in the newness of the Spirit. To them it comes in word only, not in power, or in the Holy Ghost, or in much assurance, as it comes to quickened sinners; to them, Christ who is the substance of the gospel, is as a root out of dry ground, having no form or comeliness, and they have no desire for a knowledge of his ways, and the preaching of the cross is to them foolishness. It being spiritual, and they being carnal, they cannot comprehend it, they cannot feast upon it, nor can they derive vitality from it until they are quickened by the Spirit, and born of God; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.

But to the other, that is to the living children of God, who possess life, the gospel is the power of God and the wisdom of God, it has life and comfort in it to cheer, sustain and animate that life that is in them. It is death to their carnal nature, to their outward man which perishes it has no life; but the inward man is by it renewed day by day. Every Christian must know in his own experience, that the gospel is full of life, joy and consolation to them, for they live upon it; it is Christ, and him crucified, and it is therefore the bread of heaven unto them. When the apostles and primitive ministers of the word were preaching, in all the examples recorded in the New Testament, there were some who gladly received the word, who fed upon it, and there were others who had no relish for it, who could not receive it, and who resisted and blasphemed. They preached Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and tot he Greeks foolishness, but unto

them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, it was Christ, (and therefore life, for Christ is the Life) the power of God, and the wisdom of God. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us what are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." Not them which do not believe, it is death to them, but the sheep of Christ, and they hear his voice, and they know his voice; but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers.

"*And who is sufficient for these things?*" Who is sufficient to discriminate between the living and the dead, between them that are saved, and them that perish? Who is sufficient to pour forth into the hearts of God’s living children the streams of that river that makes glad the city of our God, to warm, revive, comfort and refresh them, while in their pilgrimage, and to bear the reproach, persecution, rage and violence of those unto whom the preaching of the word is foolishness? Those, and those only, whom God sustains, whom he causeth to triumph in Christ, as he did the apostles, are sufficient for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them. Through him they can feed the flock of God, over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers, and through their God they can rush through a troop, and leap over a wall. But no part of the excellency of the power of the gospel is of them; it is of God, it is a sweet savor of Christ unto God, in them that are saved. The very fact that the gospel as preached by them does not feed, comfort or build up the unregenerate, that it is death unto death unto them that perish, is as irrefragable testimony that they are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, as

when they are the messengers of joy and comfort to them that are saved. For the preaching of the cross, if preached in its purity, is just as sure to be foolishness to the ungodly, as it is to be the wisdom of God to them that are saved.

Middletown, N.Y.
June 15, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

2 CORINTHINANS III. 7,8.

"But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?" – 2 Cor. iii. 7,8.

WE have been requested to give our understanding of this text; and such light as we have we freely offer; not however as an oracle for others, but earnestly desiring that those who read may carefully and prayerfully compare what we say with the unerring and infallible standard of truth, and subscribe to our views only so far as they shall find them established by the word and Spirit of our Lord.

In the subject on which our comment is desired, the apostle is contrasting the distinct ministrations of death and life, of letter and spirit, of law and gospel, and while he presents himself as a minister of Christ, an apostle of the Lamb, he would have his brethren understand that he is not like Moses, a minister of the law. Under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, this apostle labored much to draw the line of distinction clearly between the two dispensations, the two covenants, and to combat that propensity which he found even among the children of God, to confound them together.

In writing to this church he saw no necessity for an introductory letter or epistle of commendation, as he could claim the members of this church as witnesses. Their very existence as a gospel church presented an incontestable demonstration of his doctrine and of his calling of God; not that Paul could claim them as his workmanship, or that their conversion to christianity was the result of his labor, but rather that his credentials as an apostle were written by the

same Spirit in the heart of every child of God. He could refer them to the work of the Spirit on their hearts, which they had experienced, to witness the truth of his doctrine. And here permit us to say, Paul has introduced a rule to be observed by all the churches of Christ, and by all the children of God, for trying those who profess to be the ministers of the word. Their testimony, if it be the truth of God, will be in perfect harmony with what the Holy Ghost has said in the scriptures, and what he has indelibly written in their hearts, in their experiences. And what the here says upon the subject of the ministrations, is confirmed by the manifest handwriting of the Holy Ghost upon their hearts.

By the ministration of death, we must understand the Sinai law, as that law or covenant only was written and engraved in tables of stones, and it was only when Moses descended from Mount Sinai with that law that his face shone so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold him. Although the whole administration of Moses, including the ministration of death, yet, as only the covenant of the ten commandments were written upon the tables, we must consider that covenant as being especially intended in the text. While thousands of Gentiles as well as Israelites are looking to that law for life, and vainly hope to be justified before God by their obedience to its precepts, the apostle declares it to be the minister of death. “For if,” says he, “a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.” And again, he informs us that by the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified. The object and design of the law was not to give life, nor to open up a way by which guilty sinners could save themselves, bur rather that every mouth might be stopped, and the whole world appear guilty before God. The exhibition of a perfect standard, shows the exceeding sinfulness of sin. But still there was a glory in that ministration, as illustrated by the luster of the face of Moses, for as Moses was designed

to personate that law, so the insufferable brightness of his countenance was to show that the law of God possessed a glory which depraved sinners can neither comprehend nor attain unto. The glory of that covenant was indicated by the awful display of the majesty of God upon the Mount. The cloud was upon the mountain, emblematic of the dark prospect which is before the soul that looks to the law for life. The life of God is hidden from mortal scrutiny when Moses or the law is read, as God himself was hidden from the eyes of the children of Israel by the cloud which covered the mountain. And the thunderings, and lightnings, the trumpet and the voice of words which Israel could not endure, and which made Moses himself to fear and quake, was well calculated to show the peculiar nature and glory of the law in its application to an awakened or quickened sinner. That ministration was glorious in its exhibition of the justice of God in his demands, and in the execution of wrath, notwithstanding its weakness through the flesh to do those things which Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh to accomplish. All that law could do for transgressors was to administer death; and hence it is denominated the ministration of death. But the apostle contrasts the glory of this ministration with the gospel, or ministration of righteousness. There can be no doubt that the former was glorious, but he clearly demonstrates that the latter very far excels in glory.

First, as a covenant. The new covenant, as God himself promised, is a better one, embracing better promises, and made perfectly secure by a better surety. The new covenant was better than the old because it rested not on the conditional obedience of those whom it embraced, as did the old. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to

bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they break, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them, unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." – Jer. xxxi. 31-34. Heb. viii. 8-12; and x. 16-18.

To a child of God who has in his own experience been brought to witness the perfection, majesty, righteousness and justice of the law of God, and afterwards felt the application of the new covenant, by the Spirit writing the law of love, joy, gratitude and praise in his inward parts, who has known the Spirit's work in the administration of that circumcision which is not outward in the flesh, but inward, in the heart, and no in the letter, bu tin the spirit, and whose praise is not of men, but of God, there can be no arguments necessary to convince him of the superior glory of the new covenant over the glory of the old covenant. All the promises and provisions of the old were, "yea," and "nay," or, in other words, all depended on the faithful performance of the things which it enjoined, demanding everything of the poor, distressed, bankrupt sinner, and furnishing him with nothing; cursing him for every offense or failure. But the new covenant provides everything unconditionally. It is not "yea," and "nay," but yea and amen. The sure mercies of David. The everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, sure in all things, abounding from first to last with Jehovah's wills and shalls. Giving to the heirs of salvation the law in their hearts, and not on tables of stone that can be broken. Truly the apostle may say, If that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.

Again. There is a difference in the glory of the two ministrations. The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth were brought by Jesus Christ. So great then as is the disparity between Moses and Christ, is that between the two covenants. One was a law of carnal commandments, the other is the power of an endless life. One adapted to the fleshly or carnal state of Israel, the other applicable only to the true, spiritual family of God. The one gendering to bondage, having no power to set the captive free, the other is Jerusalem which is above, and which is free, and is the mother of all who, like Isaac, are the children of the promise. The old covenant was faulty. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith; Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant." &c.; and, "In that he saith, a new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." – Heb. viii. 7,8 and 13. The glory of the first "was to be done away," or superceded. In this sense we understand that the old covenant decayed, waxed old, and was, when Paul wrote to the Hebrews, ready to vanish away. The perfections of God, which were exhibited in the law, cannot change in themselves, but that law or covenant which cannot change in themselves, but that law or covenant which exhibited them in that form, was by its own limitation to continue only until he should come of whom it was written in the volume of the book, to do the will of God, and then he should take away the first and establish the second. Then should the sceptre depart from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet, and the reign of the Shiloh should be ushered in, with its surpassing glory. But the ministration of righteousness was to endure forever. In this new ministration, Christ and not Aaron occupies the priesthood. The glory of Aaron's priesthood is superceded; Christ has become a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. This change of the priesthood from the hands of the sons of Levi,

to Christ, rendered a change of the law indispensible, for under the Levitical priesthood the people of Israel received the law, and there was in that priesthood a want of perfection. The offerings which were made under it could not take away sins. Its bleeding victims could only point to Christ, and their blood to his blood in the new testament, or new covenant, which was shed for many.

How then shall it be otherwise than that the ministration of the spirit shall excel the glory of that of wrath? The one administers condemnation and curses to as many as are under it, the other administers righteousness, not only commensurate to the law’s demands, but everlasting righteousness, and eternal glory.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
October 15, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 690 – 695

II CORINTHIANS 5:21

Brother Beebe: Will you please give your views on II Corinthians 5:21. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." I am aware that you have many such requests from brethren and sisters; but I am so situated that I have no preaching except that comes to me in the "Signs of the Times." The "Signs," with my Bible and hymn book supply all I receive. There are no Old School Baptists within fifty miles of me, that I know of. Elder T. H. Owen is the nearest, and I have not seen him for eighteen months.

Yours as ever,
B. Newkirk.
Yola County, California.
April 11, 1866.

Reply: The apostle in the connection of this text is treating upon the subject of the complete redemption of the people of God from the curse and dominion of the law, the guilt and punishment of sin, by the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. That all for whom Christ died were sinners against God, transgressors of his righteous law, and, by nature, children of wrath even as others, is fully demonstrated; for if they were not sinners, no expiation of sin would be required on their behalf. This apostle informs us in Romans 4:24,25, that Jesus, the Lord, was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. And in our context, verses 14 and 15, he says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."

Our views on this subject, which we believe are warranted by the scriptures, are that the immaculate Son of God, who was delivered for our offenses, was holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. He was a Lamb without spot or blemish, who knew no sin in his nature, or in his works. Shining in all the brightness of his Father's glory, he was the express image of the invisible God, and he was and is the Lord from heaven, and filled with all the fullness of the Eternal Godhead. All the infinite perfections of the eternal deity were embodied in him. He was one with the Father, and he was in the Father, and the Father was in him. In his eternal identity with the Father he knew no sin. His will was and is the will of the Father, and that will is the supreme standard of holiness, according to which God worketh all things. On his unsullied purity and absolute holiness all holy beings love to contemplate; angels adore, saints extol, and devils tremble before him. If he had known sin, as attaching impurity to himself, it must have disqualified him for the great work of our redemption.

"For he that could for sins atone,
Must have no blemish of his own."

All the victims required to be slain under the ceremonial law, and indeed all that were offered from the foundation of the world, as typical of Christ our sacrifice, including that of Abel, were required to be without blemish, to show that we, the church of God, are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without spot or blemish, as set forth from the foundation of the world, pointing to that one offering wherein he through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, and by which he hath obtained eternal redemption for us.

This holy and spotless Lamb was made sin for us! How? By himself coming under that law of which he was the author and superior, and which his members in their Adamic nature had transgressed. “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his own Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them (his members) that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” In thus coming under the law he took on him the seed of Abraham. “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death; that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels,” (for angels were not in the nature of those to be redeemed, or to receive the adoption of children) “but he took on him the seed of Abraham.” That is, as explained by Paul to the Galatians, “If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” In taking on him this seed, he took on him all their transgressions. “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he

hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities (Isaiah 53:4-11).” Thus he was made sin, or, if we include the supplied words of our text, he was made to be sin for us. He was not made to sin, or to do that which was sinful; but in taking on him our nature, he took on him our infirmities; was made like unto his brethren (Hebrews 2:17).

Much has been said and written in modern times of the immaculate conception of the Messiah, as though his design had been only to take on him the seed of Abraham, and not their sins. But the very object or design was to bear the sins of his people in his own body. Embodied in the seed of Abraham, which body was prepared for him, with that seed he stood identified, as its life, and he was recognized by the law and justice of God, as being responsible for their sins. Should a capital offense be committed by a man’s hand, would not the life of the body of which that hand is a member be held in law and justice for the offense? In the typical illustration of this sublime subject, the priest confessed the sins of Israel over the head of the scape goat, and it was said their sins were laid upon the head of the scape goat, and borne away. It is in this way we understand that Jesus was made sin for us. And he was made a curse for us, as it is written in the law, “Cursed is every one that hangeth upon a tree.” Mere substitution could not meet the demands of the law. To condemn and punish the innocent, or to justify the guilty, were alike forbidden by the law which Christ came to fulfill. Yet the head being identified with its body may be held for the transgressions of the body. The right of Christ to redeem his people, as the one nearest of kin to them, and holding, by virtue of higher claim, a right of

property in the seed of Abraham, before they were partakers of flesh and blood, and before they had sinned, rests on their spiritual existence in him, anterior to their becoming partakers of flesh and blood; but his qualifications to redeem them with his blood required that he should take part of the same flesh and blood in which they had offended, that he might be recognized as being under the same law by which they were condemned. Hence he was made flesh and dwelt among them. With them identified as the head with its body; the life of the body was prepared for him. He was made sin. See him whom the heavens adored arraigned before the bar of justice, now in the form of sinful flesh, with all the iniquities of all his members found on him, not merely by imputation, as some suppose, but by actual identity of head and body.

He has taken on him that body, that seed, and in that body crushed with the mighty weight of all the sins, which with the body he assumed, the law with unabating fury pours on him the wrath that was due to the sins which were laid on him. An arbitrary act of imputation could not suffice. He is made sin, or made to be sin, *for us.* For whom? For the seed of Abraham: for his body, his bride, his sheep, his seed, his members, and for them only. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:3-4).” But we pass to consider the great purpose or design of this wonderful condescension and unparalleled humiliation of the Son of God.

We are told in the sacred word that God sent his Son to redeem them that were under the law, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; to save his people from their sins; to redeem them unto God. But justification as well as

redemption is contemplated in our text. Merely the putting away their sins would not secure to them the righteousness of God. It could only restore to them their original innocence in which they stood in Adam before sin entered. Hence to make the redeemed seed the righteousness of God himself required that the same relationship should exist between Christ and his members which we have found to be indispensable for their redemption.

Theological speculators talk of justification before God in a variety of ways. Some look for justification by the deeds of the law, or by the righteousness of their own works. But God has informed us that in that way no flesh shall be justified in his sight. As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. Others speak of the righteousness which Christ wrought out by his active and passive obedience to the law. This was indispensable in our redemption from sin. “By the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous.” And so far as legal righteousness is considered, it is secured by the obedience which Christ has rendered to all the jots and tittles of the holy law. This legal righteousness redeems and saves us from wrath and condemnation, but does it qualify us for communion with God, for fellowship with the Spirit, and for an inheritance with the saints in light? Our text contemplates a higher order of righteousness than the mere satisfaction rendered to the law for our transgressions. “That we might be made the righteousness of God.” Much more than an acquittal from guilt and condemnation is required to bring us to God, and prepare us to stand before him in the perfection of his nature. God has told us by the mouth of Daniel that Christ should not only “finish transgression and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity,” but also “*bring in* everlasting righteousness.” To work out is one thing, but to bring in is quite another. Without the former, the latter would be impossible. It was indispensably necessary that Christ should redeem us from sin, and death and hell; but having so

redeemed us, it is no less indispensable that we be made the righteousness of God, and partakers of the divine nature. We are therefore assured that Christ is of God “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” This is the name wherewith he shall be called, “The Lord our righteousness.” “For their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” So then as Christ was made to be sin for us, in the putting away of our sins, and as he was made sin by taking on him the seed of Abraham, so the seed of Abraham are made the righteousness of God in him who is the righteousness of God. Christ is our life, and he is the true God, and Eternal Life. We are in him, and he is in us, that all his members should be made perfect in one, that the world may know that God hath sent him, and that he hath loved us even as he hath loved him.

Middletown, N.Y.
July 1, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 352 - 357

GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE: II CORINTHIANS 7:10

Brother Beebe: - As I have never troubled you much, will you give me your views on the words, "Godly sorrow worketh repentance," etc. What is it that repents, the new man or the old man, or neither? Is the Christian constituted of three parts? The new man has nothing to repent of, and the old man will not.

J.M. West
Troy, N.Y.
July20, 1867.

Reply: - A careful reading of the chapter and epistle which contains these words of the apostle will show that Paul addressed his instructions to the saints in their complexed character, as children of God but here in the flesh. As subjects only of a fleshly birth they could have known nothing of godly sorrow; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, and sorrow to be godly must be a spiritual exercise. And as that life which is born of God cannot commit sin, it, when abstractly considered, has nothing to be sorry for, or to repent of. And we know of no third nature in what constitutes a Christian. In our natural birth we partake of a nature which we call human, which is depraved and by which we were children of wrath even as others. In our new birth, we are born of God, and made partakers of the divine nature. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:23)."

We cannot therefore apply these words either to the old man, abstractly from the new, nor to the new man, abstractly from the old; for in the absence of either, a Christian cannot be found on earth. The old man, before the new birth by which the new is born, can neither receive nor know the things of the Spirit of God, and when the new man shall be separated from the old, it will mingle only with the spirits of just men made perfect, and be found on earth no more. The apostle was not addressing his instructions to carnal, unquickened, ungodly men, nor to the glorified spirits of the departed saints; but to the church of God at Corinth, with all the saints which were at Achaia. These, in both epistles, he describes as being saints, born of God and yet in the flesh. The saints in the militant state of the church are always addressed in the Scriptures as subjects of two distinct births; one of the flesh, the other of the Spirit. The production of the first birth is flesh, and the production of the second, or new birth, is spirit. These two natures, which are called flesh and spirit, old man and new man, inner man and outer man, are contrary one to the other; and while both exist in every Christian, they never exist in harmony, but are in continual conflict one with the other. We know of no instance in the Scripture where the appellative is given either to the flesh or to the spirit separately considered. A Christian is then a person who has been born of the flesh, and afterward of the Spirit - a complex being, having both flesh and spirit. An old man which is corrupt with its deeds, and which he is admonished to put off, keep under, deny, etc.; and the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, and which is to be put on, followed and exhibited. The first verse of the chapter in which our text occurs, recognized in the people addressed the existence of both natures, in the admonition, “Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” In this complex character the saints are addressed in this, and in all the admonitions given by the

apostle. In either nature separately considered from the other, these admonitions would all be totally inapplicable. In this state and condition Christians and saints are subject to two kinds of sorrow; the one is called the sorrow of the world, such as is common to the world, and even to Christians while in the world, and which worketh death. Not the death of the new man, for that is eternal life, and can not die; but the death of that worldly nature which, borne down with excessive sorrow, yields up the ghost. As expressed by our Savior when he said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." Crushed beneath the guilt of all our transgressions, his holy soul groaned in spirit and was sorrowful even to death. But his was godly sorrow, so far as he was personally the subject of it; but resulting from the sins and ungodliness of those for whom he bore it. "Surely he hath borne our griefs, carried our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4)." But the apostle is here speaking particularly of the two kinds of sorrow to which God's children are subject while here in the flesh. The sorrow to which our earthly nature is subject, occasioned by losses, crosses, bereavements, disappointments, diseases and pains, tend to bow us down with sorrow to the grave. But godly sorrow arising from a godly source differs from worldly sorrow, both in its nature and effects. As the one worketh death, the other develops the life of the spirit which is manifested by a godly walk and deportment. It was thus exemplified in the Corinthians. They had been made sorry by Paul's letter (his first epistle, in which he had reproved them for many disorders which existed among them); and the sorrow thus occasioned proved to be of a godly sort, for they sorrowed after a godly manner, so that it resulted in their profit, in producing repentance and deliverance from their disorder. Herein then is the *salvation,* or *deliverance,* to which godly sorrow tends. "For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear,

yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" Godly sorrow wrought *repentance,* or reformation, as described in the foregoing particulars. This repentance, or reformation, was wrought by godly sorrow. Godly sorrow is not *repentance,* as many suppose; for it is a spiritual exercise of a quickened child of God, which springing from the Spirit which dwells in the saints, makes them sorry for their faults; not from any sense of wrath or damnation, but because they love God, and loving him supremely they love holiness, and hate sin; it therefore works, or leads to repentance, as in the examples given by Paul. It is not the dread of retribution, but the love of God in the Christian's heart that leads to repentance. Because the Christian loves God and holiness, he is filled with sorrow for his faults, and that sorrow leads to reformation.

Now as to what part of the Christian repents, etc., we understand that this is said of the Christian as he is, and not to any particular part of him. It is true that the eternal life which is born of God cannot commit sin; because it is born of God; but the Christian is nevertheless subject to vanity, and liable to transgress the laws of Christ. And the law of sin which is in the members of the Christian may, and too often does, bring him into captivity to the law of sin and death. Not to everlasting death, but to that death of which the apostle speaks when he says, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." It is the Christian, as such, including his whole person, soul, body and spirit, that is required to conform to the law of Christ.

Middletown, N.Y.
October 1, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 79 – 82

2 CORINTHIANS XI. 2, 3.

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so poor minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

The faithful apostle's jealousy was excited in regard to the saints at Corinth, but not with an unjustifiable apprehension of being himself abased in their estimation, but with a godly jealousy. The word is most frequently used in common parlance in a bad sense, as signifying an unreasonable suspicious lack of confidence, cherished without proper grounds; but the anxious solicitude of the apostle was excited lest they of whom he was jealous should suffer from the alluring devices of the old *means using* serpent who beguiled Eve, and prevailed on her to transgress the command of God. There is indeed a godly jealousy which God approves, out of which he speaks, saying, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God." – Ex. xx. 5. And as he spake by Moses to the children of Israel, "For thou shalt worship no other god: for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God." – Exodus xxxiv. 14. And again, "For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God." – Deut. iv. 24; v. 9; vi. 15; Joshua xxiv. 19. A godly jealousy, then, is that which is inspired by the Holy Spirit, and free from the pollution of carnality. Although Paul was himself, in the flesh, subject to the passions which are common to others in their fleshly nature, yet as an inspired apostle of the Lord Jesus his jealousy over his brethren was a godly jealousy. He was jealous for the supreme glory of God, and for the most sacred spiritual interests of the cause and people of God, watching with the most untiring vigilance, and faithfully warning them to beware of every seductive spirit and hurtful

snare by which their fidelity to Christ might be exposed to danger.

At the very time of writing this letter of admonition, the enemies of the truth were causing disorders in the church, and from the manner of his writing we infer that false apostles and false doctrines and disorderly preachers had been admitted among them, and were drawing them away from the simplicity that is in Christ, to whom alone their allegiance was due, and thus tending to an adulterous departure from their fidelity to Christ their espoused Husband, and an unhallowed alliance with "another Jesus." For, says he, "I have espoused you to one husband." The sacredness of the espousal of the church at Corinth applies with equal force to all the churches throughout all time; and with what diligent fidelity should the saints in all ages remember that they are by the apostles' doctrine and fellowship espoused to but one husband, and that any and every departure from him, and alliance religiously with any other lover, is an abomination which God abhors. But the old serpent, which we are told is the devil and Satan, who beguiled Eve, is constantly watching to beguile unstable souls, and with the plausible insinuation that love is so amiable that you may lavish even your conjugal affections on anything and everything that is presented in the guise of religion, and that you should extend your religious devotion to teachers and doctrines, to institutions and religious societies which the head and husband of the church has given no authority for. Among the artful means employed by the old serpent to beguile the betrothed bride, the Lamb's wife, is the suggestion that the children of the kingdom may be greatly multiplied by new alliances; and as it is designed to call them all by the name of the Lord, he will not be dishonored, displeased or jealous if we form alliance with the nations which are around about us, especially those of our neighbors who say they have a mind to work for Jesus.

The Corinthians seem to have become enamored by the false teachers which had been allowed to come in among them; and while judging from outward appearances, how soon Paul's personal appearance became weak, and his speech contemptible to them. And is it not so even now? As soon as false apostles, who transform themselves as ministers of righteousness, are admitted, with their theological plumage of the schools of men, and with the excellency of speech which man's wisdom teaches, the apostles fall into the background in the estimation of those who are beguiled by them, and are considered quite behind the times. Tauntingly they deride the chaste bride of Christ, saying she must soon become extinct, waiting for the Lord to bring in his sons and daughters, while they can multiply their converts by means within their own power. But theirs are children of the bond-woman, who can never be heirs with the children of the Jerusalem which is above, and is free, who is the mother of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

The favor with which false apostles and deceitful workers were received by the church, and the baneful influence they had gained over the unstable members, excited in Paul a godly jealousy lest they should be diverted from the simplicity that is in Christ, for well he knew that "evil communications corrupt good manners;" and the adulterous tendency of the errors into which they were being led called loudly for severe reproof. Not because he loved them not, but because he did love them, and desired to reclaim and solemnly remind them of their sacred espousal to Christ as their one husband, and their obligation to him to the exclusion of all others in that relation. In his official character, as an apostle of Jesus Christ, he had solemnized their espousal to Christ, as their one and only spiritual husband and Lord, as a chaste virgin, who, renouncing all other lovers, were in their espousal to him and "by one Spirit they were all baptized into one body," (1 Cor. xii. 13) and

"had put on Christ." – Gal. iii. 26. Any alliance, therefore, with any other than Christ is infidelity to him. To call on any other for spiritual protection, support or comfort, is to dishonor, deny and forsake him. God has said in prophecy to the Gentile church, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes." "For thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." – Isa. liv. 2, 5. How great and marvelous is that grace with God has bestowed on his redeemed people in Christ Jesus, in calling them by his Spirit from the power of darkness into his marvelous light, and in betrothing them to himself forever in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies, and in faithfulness, and in causing them to know the Lord. – Hosea ii. 19, 20. In this most sacred union with God and the Lamb, the bride, the Lamb's wife, is brought under the most sacred obligation to love, honor and obey him. "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it might be holy and without blemish." "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." – Eph. v. 22-27, 30, 32.

In view, then, of the great love wherewith God has loved us, even when we were dead in sins, and the sacredness of our marriage relations to Christ, should we not devote our body and spirit a living sacrifice, holy (consecrated and set apart) and acceptable to him, which is our reasonable service, and

"Let every act of worship be
Like our espousal, Lord, to thee;
Like the dear hour when from above
We first received thy pledge of love."

The qualifying term, *godly* jealousy, implies the existence of another kind of jealousy which is not godly, and which should be studiously avoided. A jealousy inspired by the fear of the Lord, and a sacred regard for his honor and glory, and for the steadfastness of all the saints in the faith and order of the gospel, is such as the apostle was moved by, and which be denominates godly, in distinction from a perverse, fault finding, suspicious, evil surmising disposition to make a brother an offender for a word, and to magnify the faults of others in order to exalt one's self. The prophet Elijah on one occasion said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts." He was not jealous for himself, fearing that some one would excel him; but his jealousy was excited by the abominable idolatry of Israel. "For," said he, "the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." – 1 Kings xix. 10. A godly jealousy will not only awaken in the saints fearful trembling when false apostles invade the church and beguile unstable souls, when iniquity prevails, and the love of saints grows cold, when the laws and institutions of Christ are neglected, and a lusting after the applause and honors and treasures of the world and of anti-christ causes many to turn away their ears from the truth, and to be turned to fables; but it makes those who possess it very jealous of themselves, lest they should be actuated by some selfish principle or fleshly aspiration, for they have no confidence in the flesh. A godly jealousy is always associated with deep humility in the people of God; while ungodly jealousy generally is coupled with a selfish desire for self-exaltation, and a deplorable inflation of pride and self-esteem. May we

be preserved from all ungodliness and worldly lustings, and may the grace of God which bringeth salvation teach us to live soberly and righteously and godly in the present world, and in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

A godly jealousy, as exemplified in this record of Paul, will lead the watchmen of Zion, and the faithful servants of the Lord Jesus, to beware of men who come to them in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. The espoused husband of the church has warned his bride to beware of them, and he has given them an infallible sign by which they shall be known. By their fruits ye shall know them. They may put on all the external appearance of zeal for the cause, with solemn protestation against error, and seem able to discern motes in the eyes of others, but still be like those whom Paul encountered at Corinth and in Galatia, bewitching the saints, and causing disorders and divisions among the children of God. By their fruits ye shall know them. Try them on their back track, examine what they have been doing in all their former intercourse among the churches of the saints, and you will not have occasion to retrospect them far before you will discover marks of havoc which they have made, in breaking up the harmony of the saints and scattering the flock of Christ. To scrutinize them closely, and learn what have generally been their fruits, will expose their true history. As Paul the aged, who had given such unmistakable demonstration of his calling and apostleship by what he had suffered in defending the truth, in feeding the flock of God, and in espousing them to their one husband, in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft, of the Jews five times he received forty stripes save one, thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, a night and a day in the deep, in journeying often, in perils of waters, of robbers, of his own countrymen, by the heathen, in the city,

in the wilderness, in the sea, and among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings, fastings, in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, besides those things that are without of daily recurrence, the care of all the churches; yet with all these evidences of his apostleship he had to encounter those false apostles, who transformed themselves into the apostles of Christ, and by transformation imposed themselves upon the churches as ministers of righteousness, and by them traduced, and made to appear even in the estimation of his brethren as weak, and his speech contemptible.

When we consider what the holy apostles and primitive ministers of the gospel endured, and, above all, what contradiction of sinners against himself the dear Redeemer endured, and read that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse," is it surprising that those who would at this day live godly in Christ Jesus suffer persecution? But who can so well afford to suffer persecution, and to have their names cast out as evil? If we be sustained by that grace which enabled the apostle to say, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God," (Acts xx. 24,) then can we in truth say,

"let but his grace my heart renew,
Let sinners gaze and hate me too:
The word that saves us does engage
A sure defense from all their rage."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 18
September 15, 1880

2 CORINTHIANS XII. 2.

We understand the apostle to be speaking of a vision which he had received of the Lord, some fourteen years before he wrote this epistle. “I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.” Although he speaks of the man, in the third person, yet by comparing this verse with the seventh verse, we perceive that he was speaking of what he had himself experienced. And this conclusion is in harmony with the theme of his subject in the preceding chapter. His inability to say whether he was in the body or not at the time of that memorable vision, not only gives us the idea of the perfect ecstasy of his mind, but also that it was a purely spiritual exercise, which we infer from his unconsciousness of being in or out of the body at the time. If in the body, the powers of nature were so perfectly subjected and subdued that he, for the time, felt none of its depravity, or opposition to the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, any more than the saints shall feel when perfectly liberated from the corruptions of the flesh.

Mark! He knew a man in Christ, not in Adam, for had this been a fleshly exercise, then it would have affected him as a member of the earthly Adam, but his life in Christ is not earthly nor carnal, but it is spiritual and heavenly, therefore while the new man, which is born of the Spirit, and which is spirit, enjoys the visions of eternal things, the darkness of our earthly nature comprehends them not. In his vision Paul was transported to the third heavens. By the third heavens, we understand the immediate presence of our God, or that state wherein the saints of God shall ultimately dwell. The church under the two covenants or testaments, are the first and second heaven, but the third heaven has reference to

the place and condition of the church in her triumphant glory. The hope and faith of God's children looks to that which is within the veil, whither the forerunner has for us already entered. The glories of that highest heaven, which was disclosed in vision to the favored apostle of the Lamb, were beyond the power of finite beings to describe. The laws of language by which intelligent beings communicate with each other are inadequate, and utterly fail to fully describe that glory, and this is what we understand the apostle to mean when he says he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. God has reserved to himself the power to make these unspeakable things known to his children by his Spirit, and to secure this object he has withheld from man the power to express them, so as to make the subject clear or intelligible to the natural intellect of man. Here we have an immutable law, which governs all revelation of spiritual things. As no man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him, even so, or exactly so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. And the apostle says we have received the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things which are freely given us of God, and which things are hidden from the wise and prudent; so that the natural man cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things; they have an unction from the Holy One, and they know all things.

Whether these remarks have touched the particular point on which our correspondent desired to be enlightened or not, we do not know; but such views as we have we freely give. And may we remember the admonition to the saints: If any man lacketh wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth freely to all men, and upbraideth not.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 58 - 60

II CORINTHIANS 12:2-4

Reply to brother Ford's communication on page 29: The passage referred to reads thus: "I knew a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such a one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."

We understand the apostle to be speaking of his own experience: that he himself was the man in Christ, who in vision was caught up to the third heaven, and saw and heard what mortal tongues cannot express nor human language describe. He had come to speak, in demonstration of the signs of his apostleship, of visions and revelations, having in the preceding chapters told them what he had been enabled to endure; and that out of all his conflicts and trials, God had delivered him. Now of visions he could speak understandingly, and from actual experience. The transporting vision of the heavenly world, and of the supreme glory of God, so far as Paul was able to describe it, was the same in kind, though superior in degree, to that enjoyed by all the children of God. We in our limited measure have the earnest of the Spirit given us, whereby we cry Aba Father, and there are times when our faith enters within the vail, and we are permitted to see and hear more than we have ability to express of the revelation of the glory of God to us. By the third heaven we understand Paul to mean that state in which all the saints shall ultimately be perfected, and dwell with Christ in the glory which he has with the Father. The first heaven refers to the state of the Old Testament saints, patriarchs, and prophets. The second, the gospel

church in her militant conflicts, and the final consummation of the glory of the kingdom of Christ in heaven is the third and perfected state.

To taste of the joys of the world to come has been the happy privilege of the saints at times, but we presume that in confirmation of his calling to the apostleship, and to qualify him more fully for that position, Paul was favored with a more full vision of the glory of that heavenly state than what is enjoyed by others.

He says, and repeats, that he could not tell whether he was in the body, or out of the body at that transporting moment; and it is a remarkable truth, that in proportion to the degree of all our spiritual enjoyments is the forgetfulness, or unconsciousness of the body. When we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord (II Corinthians 5:6-8)." The more we think about ourselves, our personal interest, and our individual marks of personal safety, the more prone are we to the fleshly reasonings of our poor blind and selfish minds, and the more we reason, the darker all appears. For God has ordained that his saints shall walk by faith, and not by sight. But when our faith mounts up to heaven, pierces through, and looks beyond the vail, and beholds the uncreated glories of the God of our salvation, then, whether we sink or swim, live or die, are saved or lost, is not in our mind; all that care is left with him who careth for us. Enraptured, transported with joy unspeakable and full of glory, we become perfectly unconscious of where the body is. That is a matter of so very little consequence, compared with what our faith sees and hears of unspeakable things, it cannot then intrude. The things which Paul heard he says it was *unlawful* for a man to utter. The law of language makes no provision for such utterances; for these things are unutterable. The margin

reads “not *possible.*”There is no law or governing principle, in the law of language that will permit them to utter things which are so unspeakable and full of glory. But could we be always thus transported, we should be exalted above measure; beyond that measure of ecstasy which God in infinite wisdom has appointed for us while here in the flesh. It would unfit us for the duties of life, and for usefulness in our day and generation. But our God takes care that we rise not above that measure to which we are restricted, and provides for us a counterpoise; a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet us. Our fleshly nature is formed of the dust of the ground, which is groaning under the curse; and it is doomed to bring forth thorns, and briars, to pierce and entangle us. If we never felt them piercing us, we should be very apt, like Paul, when in his vision, to forget that we were still in the body. But when they prick and tear our flesh, we groan within ourselves, and ask, “Who shall deliver us from the body of this death?” In an experience of more than half a century, the most spiritual frame of mind and most transporting joys we have ever experienced, have been when we were thinking little or nothing about ourself. All our doubts, fears, unbelief, fretfulness, and impatience is about darling self. May we then look away from self, and look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, and learn to press toward the mark of the prize of our high calling; and leave all our cares with him who has promised to raise us up in his image at the last day. Be this our care, that we glorify him in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 450 - 452

2 CORINTHIANS XIII. 5.

“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”

This important admonition is to the saints generally, as well as to the church at Corinth, unto which it was originally addressed. All the saints feel more or less inclined to examine themselves in regard to their hope, their experience, and the reality of their interest in the cleansing blood and justifying righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; and in this self-examination they are generally led to review their first religious exercises, what they experienced in their translation from darkness into the light, liberty and joy of the gospel; and this is right, and has often served to renew their strength and confidence in the assurance that what they have experienced was certainly the work of God. But it is also important that we should have the witness that we are in the faith, as well as in hope of the gospel. For now abideth faith, hope and charity, &c. So far as faith is considered a vital principle, or fruit of the Spirit, we cannot entertain a genuine gospel hope in its absence, for both faith and hope are the fruits of that same Spirit which is born of God. But we presume the apostle in this admonition has reference to the doctrine or principles of the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and for which they are commanded to contend earnestly. As these disciples possessed Christ in them, they could not possible be destitute of the grace of faith; but from the many severe reproofs which he dealt out to them in both epistles, it appears evident that they were faulty in regard to the doctrine of faith and the practice corresponding thereto. It is equally certain that God’s dear children in the present day are liable to fall into the same faults, or faults equally incompatible with the high vocation wherewith they are

called of the Lord. The term faith is often used by Paul to signify the gospel, in distinction from the law, or legal dispensation. For the law is not of faith; but the gospel is a dispensation of promises and provisions of grace and salvation, which, in order for us to enjoy, we must have faith to lay hold of them. Thus, “By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.” It is altogether opposed to the doctrine of salvation by works, for the apostle says it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all. - Rom. iv. 16. Paul had told the Corinthians of some who concerning the faith had made shipwreck, and others whose heresy in denying the resurrection of the dead had overturned the faith of some. The grace of faith cannot be wrecked nor overturned, for it is the faith of Jesus Christ, and it overcomes the world; but in regard to the doctrine of the gospel, as a system purely of grace, the saints are liable to depart, at least to some extent from it, and thereby suffer loss. How important then, that they should examine themselves in regard to what they hold or countenance as the doctrine of Christ. In this self-examination they require a more reliable standard to judge by than the decisions of learned doctors of divinity, creeds or commentaries written by uninspired men. Each of the members of Christ being personally interested for himself in the matter, instead of submitting to the judgment of another, must himself make the examination in the fear of God. We, as Old School Baptists, hold that the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ is the divinely authorized standard of our faith. Whatever we believe religiously, or in regard to the gospel, must be tested by what is written in the New Testament. However popular or palatable a sentiment may be, if it is not sustained by that standard, it is to be rejected. Whatever that standard sustains, however unpopular and

unpalatable to the flesh, must be regarded as the faith of God’s elect - the faith which was once delivered to the saints, and the faith for which the saints are required to contend earnestly.

The Spirit also which God has implanted in his saints, searches all things, even the deep things of God, and is also a witness in point to establish the fact of our being in the faith; but we must try the spirits, because many false prophets have gone out in the world. If the spirit we possess be of God, it will perfectly accord with the testimony of the Scriptures, and thus afford us two witnesses, by which every word shall be established; and by these two witnesses, the word and the Spirit, we shall be able to prove our own selves, whether we be in the faith. Having this proof we have nothing to fear on the subject of our orthodoxy, or soundness in the faith.

Frames and feelings are a very unsafe guide, and carnal reason is still more treacherous and unreliable in the matter of self-examination. Our feelings are always varying, and carnal reason is blind, neither should be trusted to decide our faith or hope in God, but the word and Spirit of our God is immutable. The natural man may read the letter of the Scripture, but he cannot perceive its spirituality, because it is spiritually discerned. The spirit which Christ has given to his saints is the “Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye [the disciples of Christ] know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.” - John xiv. 17.

“Know ye not your own selves that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?” A reprobate is one that is rejected. And this faith in which the christian church stands, rejects all in whom Jesus Christ is not; for “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Manifestly none are known

to the faith or fellowship of the saints until they can give evidence that they are born of the Spirit, for all such, and none but such, have Christ in them the hope of glory, all others are rejected, or reprobates. But what an astonishing revelation is this that the saints know, that Jesus Christ is in them. He whom the boundless heavens adore, the Son of God, the Lord from heaven, the Resurrection and the Life, the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light, dwells in all his children, and gives them the evidence that he has taken his abode in them. This above all things is worth knowing. And hence the necessity of the self-examination enjoined by the apostle. Ascertaining by divinely approved testimony, that we are in the faith, and that our faith and hope are in God, we have the assurance, yea the knowledge, that Jesus Christ is in us, and that we are in him, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. To secure us from error, from heresy and from imposition, we should pursue the examination in the light of the unerring standard, and having the assurance that our faith is sustained by the standard of divine revelation, we not only enjoy the consolation of the assurance our own selves, but are thereby qualified to minister consolation to those who with us are of the household of faith, as well as by our walk and conversation as by speaking to them of the glory of our Redeemer’s kingdom, and talking of his power.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 458 - 461

CAESAR AND GOD

“And Jesus answering, said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s.” (Mark 12:17; Matthew 22:2 1; and Luke 20:25)

An appeal has been made to Jesus by certain emissaries of the Pharisees, who, with murderous designs, had taken counsel together as to the most feasible plan for accomplishing his death, had determined to make an effort to draw him into a political antagonism with the secular powers. Having entirely misapprehended the nature of the kingdom which Christ was about to organize, and of the government which was to rest upon his shoulder, they flattered themselves that they could draw from him some expression in regard to the equity and righteousness of the Israelites paying tribute to the Roman government, which could be construed into treason against Caesar. Their plan seemed to be shrewdly conceived to ensnare him. Those messengers from the Pharisees, professing to venerate him as an unbiased and righteous judge, thought, by flattery, to conceal from him their treacherous designs, and to propose a question, the answer of which, if in the affirmative, would excite the prejudice of the Jews, and, if in the negative, would expose him to the charge of treason, and in either case would give his enemies advantage of him. But he knew their wicked thoughts, and exposed their hypocritical designs. The answer which he gave surprised and confounded them.

The importance of the decision of our Lord, in this case, has a much wider application than to those messengers of the Pharisees, or, to those who, in secret conclave, meditated his death. His reply to them is conspicuously registered by no less than three distinguished servants of God, divinely

inspired to bear a faithful record, for the instruction of generations in all subsequent ages of the world. Instead then of regarding these words as mere casual remarks, or applicable only to the time and surrounding circumstances of that occasion, we are to regard them as a mandate from the mouth of God, clothed with all the authority of the throne of Jehovah, and binding on the church down to the latest generations of mankind.

To the church of God this mandate is in perfect harmony with the whole volume of divine revelation. Viewed, however, only in the light of an example, the saints should profit by it, and beware of being drawn into the snares of the enemy, who would, if possible, tempt them to mingle politics and religion; or, consent to any union of Church and State. As the Head of his church, he refused to make a political speech, or to define, or decide the vexed questions of the rights, the power, or policy of the kings, rulers, or governments of the nations of the earth. And we are warranted to believe that none but anti-christian ministers can be prevailed upon, in their ministerial capacity, to harangue the citizens of the world on political subjects, nor will the saints as such consent to any amalgamation, nor sustain a ministry thus desecrated. Whether we consider the words at the head of this article as a maxim of divine wisdom, or a mandate of divine authority, we can not disregard it with impunity. As it deserves, therefore, our profound consideration, and obedient conformity, we propose to represent to our readers the line which the scriptures have drawn between the things which legitimately belong to Caesar, and the things which belong to God. We do not mean to admit that Caesar, or any king, potentate, or government of the earth, has any power, dominion, or property, independently of God, or that mortals can possess any thing that does not belong to God; for the earth, and all the fulness thereof are his. All things in heaven and earth, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones

or dominions, things visible or invisible, belong to him, and by him consist. But, by the things belonging to Caesar, we understand the things which we, as citizens of the world, are required to concede to human governments.

The apostle informs us that there is no power but of God - that the powers that be are ordained of God - and we can not resist them without resisting an ordinance of God. (I Peter 2:13-21; Titus 4:1; Romans 13:1-8) From this we learn that every constitutional form of human government, domestic, social, or political, God has ordained for the well being of mankind. And what we are to regard as belonging to Caesar, as we take Caesar to denote all the various forms of human government, is authority, power, honor, submission, obedience, tribute, and respect, and all of these to the full extent that we can possibly render due, without yielding to them anything which belongs to God, or that God has reserved to himself in his word. While to honor, respect, and to obey all whom God, in his holy providence, has placed in authority over us as parents, masters, magistrates, kings, or governors, becomes us, and should be done cheerfully, willingly, and heartily, not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. (Col. 3:22,23) ‘having your conversation honest among the Gentiles Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” (I Peter 2:12-19)

It is clearly manifest from these words of our Lord, read in connection with the other scriptures named in the preceding remarks, that our Lord forbids that his church, or his disciples, should ever attempt to revolutionize any system of hum an government under which he, in his divine wisdom and providence, has placed them. Whatever interest it may be proper for them to take in the political affairs of the nation, or government, to which they belong, should be strictly regarded as pertaining to them as citizens of such governments, and not as Christians. The mingling of politics with religion, and Church with State, is alike corrupting and detrimental to both. No church can abide in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship whose faith, or order, is dictated by human legislation, or whose cause is defended by secular power. No human legislation is competent to aid the Son of God in the advancement of his cause, or the building up of his kingdom, for this good reason the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, and no man can see it except he be born of the Spirit; and all earthly kingdoms are natural. Christ's kingdom is not of this world; all other kingdoms are of this world. Nor is the church of Christ, as such, competent to order or regulate the affairs of earthly kingdoms, or governments, for the children of this world are wiser, in their generations, than the children of light. Not many wise men, according to the wisdom of this world, are called to be disciples of the Redeemer. But few, comparatively, of the members of the church of God possess the elements of statesmanship, for God has designed them for a higher and holier vocation. When, for instance, the first settlers of our eastern colonies tried the experiment of a Church and State policy, no person was to be allowed to enjoy citizenship unless he were adjudged orthodox in the Puritanic faith. The church dictated the laws of the land, and the civil powers executed the decisions of the church, and no man could be expelled from the church but by the axe or halter, unless it were by banishment from the Colonies. Did this arrangement

contribute to the purity, or prosperity of either Church or State? Nay, were not both corrupted by the unnatural amalgamation? Let the voice of history proclaim in thunder tones the reply. The torturing, maiming, whipping, drowning, cutting off ears, tongues bored through with red hot irons, incarcerations in prisons, and banishments, etc., all of which was painfully suffered by Baptists, Quakers, Indians, and all whose consciences could not be forced to bend obsequiously to the popular storm. And in what age in the history of mankind has it been otherwise? All the cruel persecutions of the dark ages of Papal or Pagan usurpation are in point, and in proof of our position. The world has never known a union of Church and State that has not been fatal to the peace and prosperity of both. Hence the wisdom of the rule laid down in the words of our Lord, "Render to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar, and to God the things that belong to God." To be a good subject to the government of Caesar, or of whatever earthly government our lot may be cast under, does not disqualify us for loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ; but the laws of Christ, as we have shown, enjoin on us that, in all our civil relations, every soul should be in subjection to the higher power, rendering honor, obedience and tribute to whom these are due, and to obey these injunctions, as unto God. Nor does our allegiance and faithful submission to those who are in constitutional authority over us in the flesh, in the least disqualify us for our submission to Christ as our spiritual King, in all the obligations enjoined on us by him in his spiritual government. We can readily perceive that if Christ had authorized his apostles and disciples generally to interfere with the secular governments or the kingdoms of this world or to direct the social and domestic relations of authority and subjection in their various spheres, or, if he had called on Caesar, or any other human power, to aid, protect, or defend his cause and kingdom, that collisions could not have been avoided. Earthly governments transcend their rightful province when they presume to become defenders of

the faith, or when they attempt to interfere with the consciences, or religion, of their subjects. No human prince, potentate, or ruler can stand between a man and his God; therefore, the right is inalienable in every human being to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without let or interference by his fellow man. To his God alone is he amenable as a subject of the divine government. And, on the other hand, although Christ has absolute power over all flesh, and is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, yet in his Headship in his church he refused to interfere with the secular affairs of earthly governments. Nor has he ever allowed his church, as such, to intermeddle with the power or policy of the governments of this world. One of the most prominent and indelible marks of anti-Christ is that she reigns over the kings, or governments of the earth. (Revelations 47:18)

While as Christians, then, we have no supervision of earthly governments. We, as men in the flesh, aside from our religious relations, are required to serve our day and generation like other men. If our lot be - as with us it is or has been - in a republican form of government, in which every citizen (not as a Christian but simply as a citizen) is held responsible in his measure, that is, to the extent, at least, of his vote and personal influence, for the government, he can not excuse himself from that responsibility on the plea that he is a Christian, or a subject of Christ’s kingdom; for neither his christianity nor his allegiance to Christ exempts him from any obligation in the flesh, as a citizen of the State. A consistent Christian may be, and should be, a good statesman; certainly none the worse for being a Christian. And a good loyal citizen of the world may be a most orderly Christian, for he can not be a consistent Christian and a bad citizen.

The saints are called the salt of the earth. Their influence should be of a savory, restraining character. It does not become them to fan the flames of discord which may betray the depravity of poor fallen human nature. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” He can not be a Christian if he has not that spirit. Having that spirit, his mission is like salt to exert a preserving influence, to be like oil upon the troubled and turbulent waters, not only in restraining his own natural passions, and keeping his own body under, but also in inculcating among his fellow men the principles of “Peace on earth, and good will toward men.” That spirit leads him to do good to all men, as much as in him lies, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

We are now living in the last days, in which the scriptures admonish us that perilous times should come. These are days in which those who profess to be religious overmuch are the most thirsty for the blood of their fellow men; and those who venture ever so modestly to plead for peace on earth and to walk humbly, and especially to love mercy, are repudiated by the most popular religionists, and those who pray God to forgive, and lay not the sins of those whom we deem our enemies to their charge, must have their names cast out as evil. And if the time has not come when even brethren with whom we have taken sweet counsel together, and in whose company we have walked to the house of God, will deliver us up to be put to death, it is certainly a time in which iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold.

O! how important that Christians should watch and pray, lest they fall into temptations! Especially should Christians guard against every appearance of evil. If the elements around us are dark and stormy, if the judgments of the Lord are abroad in the land, if wars and discords are prevalent among the States and Nations of the earth, may we not enquire if we,

like Jonah, may not to some extent be the occasion of the tempest that is beating upon us? May we not ask ourselves, at least, if we have not directly, or indirectly, contributed to the calamities which are now devastating our once happy, happy and prosperous land? Have we duly appreciated our civil, social, and religious privileges when we enjoyed them? Have we been sufficiently humble and thankful for the mercies, temporal and spiritual, which God has showered so profusely upon us in times past?

This is a time, above all others, in which Christian love, humility, forbearance, and faithfulness, should be cherished. We are in the world, and in the world we must have tribulations. But a solemn charge is upon us to keep our garments unspotted. Let us not yield to a worldly spirit, or drink of the golden cup which has intoxicated and maddened the nations of the earth. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Be not censorious, or bitter, against those who differ in judgment with you, but in meekness instruct them that oppose themselves, if, peradventure, God may give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth. Pray without ceasing, and in all things give thanks to God. Commit to him the keeping of your souls, as unto a faithful Creator. Cast your cares upon him, for he careth for you. Beware of any spirit that tends to alienate you from your brethren in Christ. Always prefer Jerusalem above your chief joys. Endorse nothing in your religious creed for which you have not a “Thus saith the Lord.” Reject nothing from your faith or practice on which God has set the stamp of his divine approbation. Search the scriptures diligently, prayerfully, constantly, and anxiously. Denounce nothing as sin that God has not, in his word, disapproved; consent to nothing as good that God, in his word, has not approved. Pray not that God should alter his immutable counsel, but pray rather, “Thy will be done in earth as it is done in

heaven.” Say in the language of your Shepherd and Bishop, “Not my will, but thy will be done.” Pray in submission to the will of God, for all men, friends and enemies, for kings, rulers, and such as are in authority over you, that ye may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in honesty and godliness, for this is good and acceptable to God our Savior. As the end of our prayers is that we may live peaceably, we should pray the Lord to rule our rulers, govern our governors, preside over our presidents, and give our Senators virtue and wisdom that they may make and administer good and wholesome laws, not oppressive, but just, righteous, and equal. And while thus we pray for others, see that we ask for no right, privilege or distinction that we are unwilling to accord to all other men. As you would that others should do unto you, do ye even so to them. Thus shall ye render to Caesar all that is his due, in tribute, in honor, in obedience, to every constitutional demands. But forget not that our holy religion discriminates, and sets bounds to Caesar’s claims, reserving for God the things which belong to God. “Let no man judge you in meats, drinks, holy days, new moons, or sabbaths,” - these are matters between each man and his God. These things belong not to Caesar but to God. The three Hebrew children were justified in disobeying the command of the king of Babylon when he ordered them to worship his golden image on the plains of Dura. Our allegiance to God is first, and it embraces every thing of a spiritual nature. No human power belongs to mortals to dictate our worship, or to restrict our religious liberty. But, as we have shown, this restriction of human power, reserving sacredly to God the government of our consciences, does not disqualify us to discharge every legitimate obligation to all on earth who have authority over us. But should any potentates of the earth demand of us to render to them the things which belong only to God, though our life be at stake, as the children of the living God we are to obey God, rather than

man; and he that would save his life shall loose it, but he that will loose his life for Christ’s sake, shall find it.

Brethren, fear not him that can kill the body, and afterwards hath no more power; but fear him who hath power to cast both soul and body into hell. Our duty is to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this world, and leave the consequence with God. And we have the blessed assurance if we be cast into the fiery furnace like the three Hebrews, the form of the fourth will be with us, and the fire shall not kindle upon us. Our God can, and will, shut the mouths of devouring lions, and give us that faith that will quench the violence of fire, and in all things overcome the world. But let us be humble, meek, quiet, forbearing, patient, long suffering. Bless them that curse you - pray for them that persecute and spitefully use you. It is but a little while we have to suffer, if suffer we must, and that which is or may be -

“Painful at present, shall cease before long,
And then, O how pleasant the conqueror's song.”

Middletown, N.Y.,
April 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 341 – 349

CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

MR. SANDS, through his *Herald,* has attempted a description of a call to the ministry; the concluding part only, we have read; and from the specimen which we will give, we conclude it may pass as a call to the New School ministry; but the ministers of Christ are very differently taught of the Lord. He says: "It is sometimes urged that the apostles were illiterate men. Never was a grosser error entertained. The epistles of Peter, John, James and Jude, are standing monuments of its falsehood."

Upon the subject of ministerial qualifications, Mr. Sands is at issue with the scriptures of truth. Compare the above bold assertion with Acts iv. 13. "Now, when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled: and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." We are aware of the manner in which the advocates of *scientific divinity* dispose of this text. They tell us this was the testimony of wicked men; that it was a slander on the apostles, &c. But is this the testimony of wicked men? By no means; it is the testimony of the Holy Ghost. We are not informed that the priests, captains and Sadducees, called them unlearned and ignorant men; but we are informed expressly that they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men. Therefore, who art thou, O Sands, that repliest against God? contradicting the express declaration of God, and saying that a grosser error was never entertained, than that which God himself hath spoken. Had these ungodly Jews perceived that Peter and John were graduates from some far famed college, and that they were well versed in all the sciences of human knowledge, that they were powerful logicians, and fully capable of managing any cause, they perhaps would not have marveled so much, and

certainly could not therefrom arrive at the conclusion that they had been with Jesus. The whole testimony of the scriptures upon this subject, is in perfect harmony. Paul came not to the churches in excellency of speech, or in the wisdom of this world; for God hath made foolish the wisdom of this world; and it has pleased him to ordain that man by wisdom shall not know him, or find him out. And why? That the faith of the saints should not stand in the wisdom of men; but in the power of God. Thus in the example above, no splendid display of human erudition had dazzled their eyes; no astonishing development of worldly wisdom had overbalanced their prejudices; but what was by far more remarkable, that two ignorant and unlearned fishermen, having been divinely taught, having been with Jesus, could put their wisdom and power at defiance, and that God had given such signal evidence that these were truly his approved ministers. They had been with Jesus. But why? Never man taught like Jesus.

"He calls the fools and makes them know
The mysteries of his grace;
To bring aspiring wisdom low,
And all its pride abase."

He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; even so; for so it seemed good in his sight. They took knowledge that they had been with Jesus; for Jesus had himself often surprised the learned Jews in the same manner; and when but twelve years old, and on many other occasions, they were astonished, mortified and confounded, that all the talent, wisdom and knowledge of their greatest, wisest and ablest men could not stand before the divine wisdom of him who requires no letters or human science to establish his cause, accomplish his designs, or prostrate his opposers. Could Mr. Sands, or any other person, succeed in proving the position which he has taken, and

which the New School have generally taken, they would prove the scriptures unworthy of our confidence; but thanks be unto God, we have not followed cunningly devised fables. How frequently, even in modern times, do we have examples of the same kind. Take, for instance, the young graduate who has served seven years in a classical and Theological School, fully equipped, and duly set apart to the work; he appears in the consecrated desk, a "reverend divine;" his gestures, how graceful! Service commenced, he says his prayer with eloquence; calls on the god of missions, of Sabbath Schools, and tells him in grammatical language what to do, how to do it, and when. His prayer finished, he draws his profound sermon from his pocket, or perchance his hat; the production of mental labor, hard study; yes, his week's labor is comprised in the sheet he has prepared. He squares himself in the pulpit, adjusts his gold spectacles, and then begins to read. His sermon (for so he calls it) is made up of feathers plucked from various birds, His voice is soft and oily, for their lungs are always weak; the clock tells thirty-five minutes, and the farce is over. The lesson is read, the preacher is admired, and all the learned and polite take knowledge of him that he has been *at school.*

But we have listened to the preaching men of a very opposite description. We have heard a Van Velsen, brought up at hard work, laying stone fence; which honest calling he still followed, for the support of his family, for years after he commenced his ministerial labors; he could scarcely read, write or speak a sentence according to the rules of gram. mar; but we have heard the truth of heaven thundered in awful eloquence from his lips; before him the learned ministers of the city of Yew York have quailed in amazement not one of them could stand before him in the discussion of gospel truth; his hearers perceiving that he was unlearned and ignorant, took knowledge that he had been with Jesus. Time would fail us to speak of a Warren, a Mead, a Choat,

and a host of others, some of whom have never spent one week in school. Brother Mead (if we do not mistake) informed us that he had never spent but half a day in school in his life; yet who that knows the man, as a preacher, does not know that he has been with Jesus. Not all the flowing tide of *moon-shiney* nonsense, taught in the halls of human science, and learned by the studious school-boy, can ever feed a heaven-born soul, as God is often pleased to feed his hungry children, through the gifts which he has bestowed on such unlearned and ignorant men as we have named.

Mr. Sands says he will never term any one illiterate, who can embody his thoughts in writing with the accuracy and force of the apostle Peter. Has Mr. Sands the audacity, in the face of heaven, to ascribe to human literature, the accuracy and force of the gospel that Peter wrote by immediate. inspiration of the Holy Ghost? Does he not know that holy men wrote and spake as they were directed by the Holy Ghost? We are particularly informed by our Lord himself, where Peter received his knowledge of the Son of God. “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjonas, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven.” Painful as it is, the conclusion is unavoidable, that all who embrace the theory of Mr. Sands and his brethren on this subject, are strangers to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and are therefore left in the blindness of their minds, and in the gross darkness of human wisdom, to worship their drag and burn incense to their net. They are ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
May 15, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 615 – 618

CARRAWAN THE MURDERER

The article copied into this number from the North Carolina Republican was forwarded to us by some friend in the South, for insertion in our columns. The circumstances of the case of Carrawan - his connection with the old order of Baptists, the murder by him committed—his detection and arrest, etc., we know nothing about, more than what we learn from the article which we have copied; but the baseness of the attempt of the writer, to whom the article copied by us from the N.C. Republican is intended as a rebuke, deserves the censure of all honorable men. From the days of Christ's incarnation and age of the apostles and primitive saints, the church of God has been from time to time imposed upon by imposters; some of whom have developed their true characters like Carrawan, in violent outrages and bloody crimes, while a still greater number have proved themselves unworthy of the confidence which had been reposed in them, by their insidious insinuation of corrupt and unscriptural doctrines and practices among the churches, for the purpose of interrupting the peace, and subverting the order of the kingdom of our Redeemer. But the attempt of the cringing calumniator of the Old Baptists, who hides his dishonored and guilt-stained name behind the anonymous signature which he has presumptuously assumed and desecrated, to charge that the doctrine held, and order maintained by the Old Apostolic order of Baptists is in keeping with and calculated to produce deeds of blood and violence, is scarcely less atrocious than that charged on Carrawan the murderer; for he who is sufficiently base to attempt to stigmatize the doctrine of Christ as held by the Old School Baptists is sufficiently depraved to persecute them even unto the death. The very spirit manifested by this "accuser of the brethren," and stigmatizer of the doctrine of Christ is the same that has always, when opportunity has been presented, deluged the

earth with the blood of the saints of God. In regard to the tendency of Baptist doctrine to produce murder, etc., when have they ever been, as a body, detected in any concerted plans for enforcing their doctrine or practice by the sword? When have they ever attempted to enforce their views, or to deprive their opponents of the free exercise of their religious peculiarities, by coercive measures? Never. What then is there in faith or practice to justify the insinuation that their doctrine is in harmony with, or calculated to produce murder? Is the pretended tendency found in their utter denial that men have a right to enforce their religious opinions by civil, secular, ecclesiastic or military force? Is it in their rejection of all human means for advancing the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom? Or is it to be found in their uniform reliance on God, and on him alone to maintain his cause, and to defend them from the violence of their persecutors?

The columns of our secular newspapers have been crowded with accounts of murders, rapes, seduction, drunkenness, and almost every description of desperate wickedness committed by members of the various workmongrel denominations of religious professors. Scarcely a week passes without some startling development of the kind; but if once in a century a Judas or a Carrawan is detected as standing nominally in connection with the Old Baptists, the alarm is raised with the same imblushing effrontery as though our accusers had never been involved in such mortification and disgrace. But in conclusion we ask, Were there any names of Old School Baptists attached to the petitions which flooded our Congress a few years ago, praying our government to send an army into Georgia to mow down the citizens of that state for imprisoning two missionaries for stirring up a spirit of insubordination among the Cherokee Indians against the laws of Georgia? Were any of the Old School Baptist's names found attached to the petitions more recently praying Congress to protect the

foreign missionaries by use of the sword in foreign countries? Have any Old School Baptists joined in the clamorous noise in praying our state Legislatures to enact the Maine Liquor Law, and by armed police to invade the peaceful dwellings of our citizens, destroy their property, and butcher them if they resist? Have any of the Old Baptists mingled with the abolitionists in trying to excite the Southern slaves to cut the throats of their masters? We are happy to say we have never known an instance of the kind. What then is in their doctrine, their practice, or in all their history to excite alarm?

Taught by the sacred precepts of their divine Lord, when they are reviled, they revile not again; when smitten on one cheek, they turn to their assailant the other cheek also; and this has been their uniform character in all ages of their existence, from the days of John the Baptist to the present day. Who can say as much for any other professed order of religionists on earth?

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 74 - 76

Cast Not Your Pearls Before Swine

”Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.“ Matthew 7:6

This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed, "Christ's Sermon on the Mount," in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit, and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemer in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, or sanctified (set apart) for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind, were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field, none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted

by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed. All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, He provided that the food necessary for man's subsistence should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth, earthy, his subsistence must, to be adapted to the support of his earthly nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature as a fallen, sinful earthy man. So in the figure, we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things-, as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth, earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the earth, and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus, we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else. Those who are thus born of God are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," etc., chosen, consecrated and set apart, "sanctified by God the Father," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," etc., cleansed and washed, purged and

justified, they shall be called the holy people, and as a holy, consecrated people, they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven.

Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people, a people whom God has cleansed, and which, we are forbidden, to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb; he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation 22:15, they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, nor minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is

food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides, it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, that the Gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. The ministers of Christ have nothing but the Gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach, and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the Word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost, while all others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition, is that we are forbidden to attempt to Christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the Word, and applying to them the ordinances of the Gospel as a means of salvation, by Catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, etc...as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which

is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of our text: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine." It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual privileges, their Christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellency cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels.

Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly; infidels, Arminians, will-worshipers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace. The psalmist said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul." They who fear the Lord can understand the language, they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud and like swine , serve only their swinish appetites, their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and

that is the gratification of their ravenous appetite-, cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the most common earth, and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat; so when the Christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet, and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them "beware of dogs," and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, Ye "are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast our pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend us.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times - November 1, 1886

CAUSES OF CRIME.

“IN a late charge to the Grand Jury, Chief Justice Parker, of New Hampshire, noticed the fact that, although three-fourths of the crimes that had been committed were a few years ago attributed to intemperance, yet the extensive reform that has taken place in regard to spirit drinking has not checked the prevalence of crime. He thought crime to be on the increase; and among all the causes that operate to cause the increase, he gave the first place to a prevailing neglect of family government. He alluded to the change which had taken place in society, from the rigid discipline of the past generation to the laxity which now dispenses with the exercise of parental authority, and expressed the opinion that this was the opposite extreme, which was productive of the greatest social evils. Such an opinion from such a source, is entitled to the serious attention of those who allow their children to go loose into the world.” – *Vermont Chronicle*.

So far as human governments are designed for the suppression of crime, we believe with Judge Parker, that the government which God has vested in parents, is by far the most important, and when duly exercised, the most effectual. And for this very reason have we protested against the efforts which are being made throughout the land, to take the children of our country from the control of their parents, and place them directly or indirectly under the control of an ever aspiring clergy. Under whatever pretense, whether of educating, religionizing, or moralizing them, the rights which God has vested in parents, should be regarded as too sacred to be violated under any ordinary circumstances. Next to, but not before the parents’ authority, comes that of the public magistrate; his business is to punish crime of a secular nature, and to be a terror to evil doers; to protect the people in the full enjoyment of their social, civil and religious rights,

from all encroachments upon their rights by others. But when human legislatures or earthly magistrates so far transcend their proper sphere, as to attempt to manufacture consciences, to revise, magnify, or abridge, or enforce the laws of God, or in any way, or to any extent interfere with the rights of conscience, or even abridge the natural rights which God has endowed his creatures with, they may always look with a certainty for an increase instead of a decrease of crime. If our legislatures and magistrates would have their authority respected by the people, they must take care not to infringe the people’s rights.

Notwithstanding the self-evident position of Judge Parker, the correctness of whose remarks we think cannot be doubted, efforts are now being made to place the 700,000 children of our state indirectly under the government of a set of Prussian school officers, whose whole power is made to centre in a board of five trustees, two of which are reverend doctors of divinity; and the arguments used for this transfer of authority from the parents to the priesthood, is that they may be moralized and christianized by this unnatural and anti-christian arrangement.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
May 1, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 553 – 555

Sharpsville, Tipton Co., La.
March 13, 1867.

Brother Beebe: There is a man by the name of Joseph Smart, an Englishman, who came from Philadelphia, to Jeffersonville, Ia., and from thence to Columbus, Ia., where he has been living nearly four years, in which he has represented himself as a minister of the Old School Baptist order, and in that character has been preaching among some of our churches. There seems to be some mystery about his standing. He brought no letter of commendation, but gave as a reason that the Baptists where he came from did not give letters of dismission. (I suppose he meant his new style of Baptists.)

Since the last session of our Conn's Creek Association, I received a letter from a very worthy and highly esteemed brother in the ministry endorsed by others of the same standing, informing me that this man, Smart, had once obtained a standing among the Old School, evincing considerable speaking ability, and seeming to be sound in doctrine. He was soon ordained to the work of the ministry, and called to the pastoral care of two churches. His career, however, in this position was short. Although his preaching was called sound, yet the spirit of the gospel seemed lacking. Instead of meekness, humility and love, his ministry was characterized by a harsh and proscriptive spirit, having a tendency to scatter and divide the flock more than to unite and harmonize them. I am informed by the brethren that he did not appear to have any idea of gospel order as held by Old School Baptists. On one occasion, he called on the church to exclude a minister who had previously supplied her, for some misconduct, whose membership had never been in that church, and when informed that the case was out of their

reach, he took his hat and left the house, and on the next day set up an opposition meeting. After a few such moves, and the brethren had become greatly tried with him, he set up a distinct order for himself, refusing to recognize any church or people on earth who did not follow him. They refused to give or receive letters of dismission, and thus denied fellowship with the Old School Baptists whose order he had departed from.

On another occasion, the Welsh Tract Church with Elder Thomas Barton, their pastor (a church of the first standing), was denounced by him as the Spanish Inquisition. For his general disorderly course, sarcasm and bitterness against the Old Baptists, he was duly excluded from the church. He continued, however, to maintain his hostile position for about twenty years; neither asking or receiving any fellowship from the Old School Baptists.

These exposures are painful for me to make, nevertheless having this knowledge myself, I feel it to be my duty to warn the churches of approaching danger.

If he is a manifest child of God, let him go back to the church from which he was excluded, make gospel satisfaction, be restored to fellowship, and bring from thence a regular letter, and then be received here in regular order.

Jesse G. Jackson.

Remarks: We were personally acquainted with Joseph Smart when he had a standing with the Old School Baptists, and were cognizant of his departure from our faith and order some twenty years ago, and of his exclusion; and of his virulent and persistent opposition to the Old School Baptists in Philadelphia for many years. A disorganizer of the stamp of those described by the apostle in Romans 16:17,18 and II

Thessalonians 3:6, who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned (from the apostles), and such as the saints are commanded to avoid. If anything further concerning his disorderly course should be desired by churches or brethren in the West, we refer them to any of the churches, ministers and brethren in the Delaware Association.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 474 - 475

CHARITY.

"AND we believe," says the *Christian Watchman,* "the time is not far distant when a man's standing as a christian and a good citizen will be measured by the amount of his charities." The *Cross and Journal* enquires, "Is it correct?"

REMARKS.

WE are mistaken if these learned editors, in their use of the word *charity,* do not wish to be understood in a *popular* and not scriptural sense. The bible connects charity with faith and hope, and ascribes to it the pre-eminence; and as the less important are the fruits of the Spirit of God, and utterly beyond the command or control of mortals, so of course the greatest can only be possessed and enjoyed by such as receive in as a sovereign favor from God, who is the giver of every perfect gift. By charity, in a bible sense, we understand the love of God, and in this view of the subject it is easy for the christian to conceive the comparative superiority it holds over faith and hope, the former being the cause, and the latter being but effects. And again, God's love in its nature possesses a superior excellency; it is eternal, immutable, almighty and sovereign; eternal, it had no beginning, and can never terminate; immutable, fixed from the ancients of eternity upon its objects. "Neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." - Rom. vii. 38-39. it is invincible; nothing can withstand the power of the love of God, many waters cannot quench it, floods cannot drown it, sin, death and hell combined could not subdue it. It is omnipotent in its operations; the stoutest hearts in all Adam's wretched family have bowed in subjection to it; yea, we are told it is stronger

than death. It is sovereign, who can command it? Who can produce it? Surely no one. Jehovah has set his mercy on whom he would, for he has mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. He says, “Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.” View the love of God in any other light than sovereign, and where would be the obligation of gratitude to God for it? If the possession of it in our hearts does not depend exclusively on the sovereign pleasure of God, then we must possess and enjoy it, if at all, independently of God, and who would not tremble at such an idea.

This charity or love of God is communicated by the Holy Ghost to the redeemed of the Lord in their new birth, and in its operation on their hearts produces love to God. “We love him because he first loved us.” It produces love to his truth, love to his ordinances, his laws, and to his people, and makes them kind and affectionate one towards another. This charity, or love of God, when shed abroad in the hearts of God’s people; gives them bowels of compassion and mercy one towards another; it is not productive of ostentations shows which are common among the Gentiles; it does not blazon the liberality of its possessor through the press to earth’s remotest bounds, but rather teaches and enforces the command of Jesus, not to let the left hand know what the right has performed. It leads its possessor to visit the widow and the fatherless, and to do good as much as in them lies unto all men, but especially to the household of faith. The love of God does this and more; hence in answer to Mr. Stevens, of the *Cross,* we answer: The christian is to be measured by the charity he possesses, but we see no connection between his christianity and his qualification for good citizenship in this world.

But we are led to conclude that the editor of the *Watchman* intends *popular* or modern charity. This is

altogether another thing, very different in nature and in effects. It is any principle that will lead men to appropriate their money, wealth and influence to the service of the institutions of modem benevolence. If a man would in a popular sense be charitable, let him join all the fashionable religious societies of the day; let him patronize every scheme which men have devised and still are devising to convert the world, and if he has funds he can become very charitable. This kind of charity is very splendid in the eyes of an adulterous generation; it is sounded far and wide; it rings from the pulpit; it is echoed through the press. This charity regards no other qualification on the part of its patrons than a well-filled purse, and an open hand to deal it out at the call of the clergy. This charity will also visit the widow and the fatherless, not to relieve their pressing wants, but to extort for professedly pious purposes the "widow's mite," and the hard-earned dollar of the orphan boy. If the widow or the fatherless are in distress, and pinched with hunger, or chilled for want of clothing, modern charity will perhaps send her agents to the sick haunts of wretchedness, commissioned to say unto them, "Be ye warm, and be ye clothed," and perhaps in the plenitude of their kindness they will give the despairing widow or the starving orphan - what? A loaf of bread, a bushel of grain, a suit of comfortable apparel? Oh no! They will give them a tract, from which they may learn' that these pious agents are about evangelizing the world, and are in want of money to carry on the enterprise. Yes, verily, this popular charity will creep into widow's houses, and lead captive silly women, as saith the scriptures of truth.

If we understand him, this is the kind of charity the editor of the *Watchman* intends, and there is perhaps more truth in what he says than his brother editor is willing to admit; indeed the time has already arrived in which "the vile person is called liberal, and the churl said to be bountiful," while every one who refuses to acknowledge or patronize their

schemes are denounced as illiberal and covetous. it is considered charitable in these days to be in fellowship with all denominations of professors of christianity, who will unite in the common cause of modern mendicancy, to persecute nonconformists, to brand with infamy, if possible, the latter, sad measure the christianity of' the former by the amount of his charity measured in dollars and cents.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
January 7, 1835.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 194 – 197

THE CHERUBIM AND THE MERCY SEAT

Mr. Beebe: Please give your views of the Cherubim and the Mercy Seat, as set forth in Exodus 25. What do they represent or teach? Your compliance with this request will oblige.

Hannah Miller.
Penn Yan, N.Y.
December 28, 1865.

Reply: That the tabernacle, the ark, and all thereunto pertaining were designed to typify the spiritual things of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are more clearly elucidated in the gospel of the Son of God, we presume will not be controverted or doubted by those who know and love the truth. But it is not always our privilege to comprehend their exact signification and application to the things which they are designed to represent. The Cherubim, and the Mercy Seat were very essential parts of, or accompaniments to, the Ark of the Testimony which is described in this chapter, and the ark would be incomplete without them. There is a divine beauty in the subject far beyond what we can express. The inspired apostle speaks of the figures of the old dispensation as patterns of the things in heaven. That is, as patterns of the things which are found in the spiritual Jerusalem, the gospel church. Some thing must therefore be found in the gospel church answering to the figurative import of every Old Testament figure.

The tabernacle, which God commanded Moses to make, was a portable building, or tent, designed to contain the ark, and the holy or consecrated furniture which he commanded to be placed within its curtains. A more solemn charge was given

to Moses, to "Look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount (Exodus 25:40)." It was designed for a sanctuary in which God would commune with Israel through their high priest. We will not now stop to comment upon the tabernacle; but devote this article more particularly to the inquiries made concerning the Cherubim and the Mercy Seat. The subject of inquiry is thus stated in the chapter referred to. "And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt make two cherubim of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat. And make one cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other end: even of the mercy seat shall ye make the cherubim on the two ends thereof. And the cherubim shall stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and their faces shall look one to another; toward the mercy seat shall the faces of the cherubim be. And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel (Exodus 25:17-22)."

In following the order of our subject, the mercy seat should first be considered and then the cherubim which surmount the mercy seat.

First, The Mercy Seat. How significant and imposing the name! There were no provisions of mercy found in the law of commandments. Justice with an even hand brandished a flaming sword, and "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy." But in the new Covenant mercy has prepared her seat. "For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and

their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more (Hebrews 8:12).” “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Psalm 85:10).” This seat and center of the mercy of God is the only place where Righteousness and Peace can embrace each other and establish everlasting peace in righteousness or without infringing the stern demands of divine Justice. It could not be done on any other seat or basis than that of the atonement made for the transgressions of the people of God by our Lord Jesus Christ. For him, and all his members, in view of his perfect work, God has said, “Mercy shall be built up forever.” “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven (Psalm 89:1,28,29).” That the mercy seat in our text is designed to represent the atonement seems clear to us from the following considerations, viz.:

1. The ark of the testimony which it was to cover (and in which the testimony was held) with the rod of the priesthood, the golden pot of manna, etc., is evidently applied to the gospel church (Hebrews 9). This ark though made of wood, which was chosen and ordained of God for the purpose, was overlaid within and without with pure gold, and thereby rendered imperishable, and beautiful. And in no other place is the testimony of God’s truth preserved inviolate. No where else can the delicious gospel manna on which God’s spiritual Israel are fed be found, but in the gospel church, and it is only there the fruitful rod of the priesthood is kept. The ark was definite in its exact measurement; two cubits and a half long, and one cubit and a half broad. The mercy seat in measurement exactly corresponding shows the atonement for the church, ample, but without superfluence. The mercy

seat as exactly covered the ark as does the atonement of Christ cover the church.

2. The mercy seat was required to be made of pure gold. Gold is emblematic of righteousness, and the atonement to answer the design contemplated required to be immaculately pure, and in all respects perfect. The atonements under the ceremonial law, by the blood of bulls, goats, and other victims, could make nothing perfect. The church is "redeemed, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Could the divine law have found the smallest particle of alloy, dross or defection in Christ or in his propitiatory work, then would his work have failed to secure the salvation of his people. But as the pure gold will pass the fiery ordeal of the crucible, without loss, so the glorious High Priest of our profession was able to endure the scrutiny of the omniscient eye, was justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.

3. The atonement answers to the figurative import of the mercy seat, as showing the "new and living way" of our access unto God, which is consecrated for us through the veil, which is his flesh. Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, and the God of glory "laid on him the iniquities of us all," of all the seed of Abraham, for, "if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." Here upon the basis of his perfect atonement the seat of reconciliation, acceptance, and communion is established through our High Priest. "And thou shalt put the mercy seat above upon the ark." The atonement of Christ cannot fail of being applied to the church of Christ. It is the covering for the church, when God communes with her through her most holy Mediator, the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. It is above the church, and what they never could have attained

in any other way, but it is a perfect covering, and a safe protection. “And there will I meet with thee, and commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.” It is by the atonement that the saints are dead unto the old Sinai Covenant, and married to him that is risen from the dead. Hence through, or by virtue of, the atonement they are brought under law to Christ, instead of Moses, and on this mercy seat communion with God is secured through our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his Spirit his law is written in our hearts, and recorded in our mind.

4. It is the pure gold of the atonement that overlays the ark, or church, within and without. Her internal joy, peace, love, fellowship, devotion, and worship is by an application of Christ and his atonement to his church and people. On no other basis could we approach unto God. His terror would make us afraid, and his frowning justice would stop our mouths, but for the atonement which completely shields and covers us; but in this atonement we come boldly to the throne to ask for mercy and find grace to help us in every time of need. But our limits admonish us that we must pass to the other general division of our subject.

Second. The two cherubim. The name *Cherubim* is the plural of *Cherub.* When but one, it is called cherub, and if two or more they are called cherubim, which signifies an angel, or angels, but all angels are not designated cherub or cherubim. The word *angel* has a variety of applications in the scriptures. Sometimes it is applied to God’s messengers who are sent to preach his gospel. Sometimes it applies to the spirit of a man, and sometimes to the spiritual life of Christians which always behold the face of God; sometimes it is used to signify those heavenly intelligences in glory, such as bore the message of the incarnation to the shepherds in Jewry. There

are also several other applications found in the scriptures. But Cherubim and Seraphim express to us those mediums through which the presence of God, in some of his perfections, is set forth; as the *angel of his presence* which saved his people in all their afflictions.

The two cherubim which stand upon the mercy seat, we have thought were intended to represent to us the two testaments.

I. Their position: the Old and New Testaments, or covenants, and all revelation of God to men are based upon the great purpose of salvation by grace which centers in the atonement, as the cherubim of our text are in the mercy seat. So stand the two testaments. The first testament takes its position as early as the application of the atoning blood and justifying righteousness was made effectual in the salvation of Abel and Enoch. Its wings are extended forward signifying in all the prophets and typifying in all the ritual of the law the coming of the Messiah, his sufferings and the glory that should follow. As early as the time when man was driven out of paradise, the cherubim, and the flaming sword were placed to keep the way of the tree of life, and prevent Arminians from helping themselves to the fruits of that tree. The word of God communicated through the law, like a flaming sword, turned every way, intercepting all human agencies in their futile efforts to procure life and immortality independent of that atonement or mercy seat which their wings covered. There they are still found meeting the workmongrel tribes of the earth at every point, with the declaration. Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins, no mercy seat, no atonement, no salvation in any other name or way.

II. The angel of the divine presence was in his holy law, but so far as his church was concerned, it stood as a cherub on

the end of the mercy seat, testifying of Christ, and by all its types, shadows and predictions testifying that he should come as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God.

III. The wings of this cherub were lifted over the mercy seat, or atonement, and from the one end of the mercy seat extending to its center, even as the law and the prophets were until John; but they could extend no farther, for here at the center were they to meet the wings of the other cherub.

IV. Their faces were made to look one to another. The law demanding, the gospel canceling all its demands. The one predicting, the other responding, so they faced each other, and saw eye to eye in the day of atonement, when God brought again Zion. The law and the gospel face each other and meet harmoniously in the priesthood which intervenes.

V. Their faces, while they were looking to each other, were at the same time both looking to the redemption which is by the atonement. All that the law demanded concerning the church, it looked to Christ, in the gospel, to perform. While the Gospel cherub from the other extremity of the church, or mercy seat, looked into the face of the Old Testament for the pattern of the things in heaven, so that all that was written in the law and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Christ should be fulfilled. All the jots and tittles of the one were promptly met and paid by the other.

VI. The New Testament with wings uplifted from the center of the mercy seat to its termination in the full complete and everlasting salvation of the church of God, meets the wings of the other cherub at the center of the mercy seat. The law and the prophets were until John; since that period the gospel is preached. Thus both cherubim met and centered in

Christ our High Priest, whose advent was between them, yet covered by their wings.

VII. Between these two cherubim the God of glory sent his Son into the world. The Word was made flesh, and came, as in the volume of the book it was written of him, to occupy this gracious mercy seat. After the order of Melchisedec, as Priest unto the Most High God, the King of Righteousness, he put his priestly garments on. Between the two dispensations his priestly offering was made, when he offered himself without spot unto God. True to his word, the Eternal Godhead bowed his heavens and came down, and at the center of the mercy seat met the Great High Priest of his spiritual Israel between the cherubim and was manifest in the flesh. “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,” Christ was in the Father, and the Father was in Christ. Heaven and earth were brought together. Justice from the utmost throne of heaven was there, and smiling mercy was prepared to greet, embrace and kiss that Justice whose stern demands were inexorable; but at the mercy seat completely liquidated. And at the mercy seat Justice as fully demands the salvation of all for whom this mercy seat is a covering, as it demands the execution of the sentence of the law on all whose sins are not covered, and whose transgressions are not removed. Here at the mercy seat, where righteousness and peace have kissed each other, God has established his dwelling, and the inspired psalmist prays in the spirit, “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth. Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh stir up thy strength, and come and save us. Turn us again, O God, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved (Psalm 80:1-3).”

Again the holy psalmist testifieth of the power and majesty of God, and of his infinite condescension. “He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under his

feet. And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies (Psalm 18:9-11).” Observe his wonderful advent to our world. Upon the Old Testament cherub was he borne; his descent from heaven was predicted by all the prophets, and witnessed by the law. On the wings of the wind (an emblem of his Spirit which was in his word) he did fly. “Who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky (Deuteronomy 33:26).” Yet in the darkness of the legal dispensation, he fixed his secret place, and around about him and his pavilion were dark waters and thick darkness. But at the brightness that was before him, beaming with inexpressible radiance in the face of Jesus Christ, the dark, dreary, portending darkness of Sinai passed, amidst the tempest of hail stones and coals of fire which spent their utmost fury upon his dear Son. Then were the channels of waters seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered; at the rebuke of the Lord, at the blast of the breath of his nostrils, “He sent from above and took me, he drew me out of many waters (Psalm 18:16).”

In conclusion, for we must close this article, if we are right in regard to the figurative import of the ark, the mercy seat, and the cherubim; may the sound of their wings be heard by all the people of God, as in Ezekiel’s vision, “And the sound of the cherubims’ wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh (Ezekiel 10:5).” If we are right in our application of the cherubim’s wings, they mean the testimony of the scriptures, in which the voice of the Almighty God is uttered. May it be ours to hearken to the things which are spoken in the scriptures, and sheltered under these wings of the cherubim, having a “Thus saith the Lord” for our protection, we may sit securely and hurl defiance to all the enemies of God and truth.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 328 – 335

CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION.

When the Sadducees desired to embarrass our Lord in regard to the doctrine of the resurrection, and to make that doctrine appear improbable and absurd, they exposed their own ignorance of the Scriptures and of the power of God by stating what they regarded as an insuperable difficulty of one woman who, according to the provisions of the law, had had seven husbands, and demanded, "Whose wife of them shall she be in the resurrection, for seven had her to wife?" If they had known the Scriptures, they would have understood that all fleshly relations are dissolved in death, and if they had known the power of God, as displayed in the power of the resurrection of Christ, and of his people, they would have known that Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. That such a change was effected by his death and resurrection as to forbid the thought that he shall henceforth be known any more after the flesh. His risen body is spiritual and immortal, and in the resurrection of his people they also shall be raised up, spiritual, incorruptible and immortal. Their bodies shall be changed from corruptible to incorruptible, from terrestrial to celestial, from dishonor to glory, from weakness to power, from a natural body to a spiritual body (I Corinthians 15:42,44); changed and fashioned like the glorious body of him who has risen indeed, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

In his reply to the caviling of the Sadducees, our Lord, after declaring their ignorance of the Scriptures and of the power of God, and their consequent error, speaks of the children of this world in distinction from the children of the resurrection. Now that we who contemplate this sublime and glorious subject may escape the ignorance and error of the

Sadducees, we propose to notice the classification of the two kinds of children - the children of this world and the children of the resurrection. These are distinct relations, and so distinct that only some of those who sustain the first shall be counted worthy of the other. The children of this world marry and are given in marriage; but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage. From these words of our Lord it is clearly inferred that some, but not all, who sustain the relation of children of this world will not obtain that world of which he is speaking, nor that resurrection which is therewith connected. That there will be a resurrection of both the just and of the unjust, and that the hour shall come when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth, some to a resurrection of life, and others to a resurrection of damnation, is fully declared in the Scriptures. But the resurrection which is connected with that world where the children of the resurrection are the children of God, and equal unto the angels, is a resurrection to life and immortality. We do not know that those who shall rise to damnation will be any less children of this world in their resurrection than before it, or to what extent any relation they sustain now will be changed. But we wish to treat specially on the resurrection of which our Lord was speaking in our text.

Whatever may be the doom or destiny of the ungodly, we know there will be in their resurrection a very great change with the children of God. And although "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him (I John 3:2)." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:4)." "They will behold his face in righteousness, and be satisfied when they awake with his likeness (Psalm 17:15)."

To know the Scriptures and the power of God on this subject so as to escape the error of the Sadducees, let us carefully examine what the Scriptures teach in regard to it. And

First. What is implied in the relationship wherein we are known as *children of this world?* The relation of children always implies parentage, generation, birth and development; and all children must necessarily partake of the nature, and be composed of the elements of their parents. In all these respects, all the family of Adam are in their relation to him the children of this world. Adam was made of the dust of the ground, and God said to him, and to us as we were all in him at that time, "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The dust is a part of the world. Jesus said to his Father, "I have manifested thy name unto them which thou gavest me out of the world." "I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine (John 17:6,9)." They are redeemed from the world, but the apostle declares that they were by nature children of wrath, even as others. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind (Ephesians 2:2,3)." As children of this world, our nature was, and is, adapted to the elements of the world, and like all the other children of the same family, we marry and are given in marriage; the natural relationship of parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, males and females, masters and servants, rulers and ruled, these all belong alike to the race of mankind as children of this world. We were created with the creation of the world, and in the travail and developments of the world we were brought forth in the order of nature. We breathe the air of the world, our food and sustenance is all of this world. But this world is

destined to pass away, and our relation to it shall be dissolved, and the places which know us shall know us no more. Like a vesture, all these elements shall soon be folded and laid aside.

But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, shall differ very essentially from what they are or were in this world, in all these respects:

1. Their relationship to this world shall cease, and the new relationship of children of the resurrection shall be developed.

2. All the social relations peculiar to the families and kindreds of this world shall be discontinued, so we shall no more marry or be given in marriage. And in that world we shall know no man after the flesh; and although Christ was, in the days of his incarnation, known after the flesh, yet henceforth shall he be known no more after the flesh, or as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief.

3. "Neither can they die any more." Mortality shall be swallowed up of life. "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 15:53-57)."

4. The children of the resurrection shall be equal to the angels. Not only as pure, holy, incorruptible and immortal, but equally as ethereal, celestial and spiritual'equally far

removed from earth and earthly propensities, worldly pollutions, and sensual proclivities. But more especially in the immediate sense of our subject, equal unto the angels in regard to such changes as are common to the children of this world, by marriages, births, deaths, or distinctions of sex, classes, conditions, etc. All alike, and always alike. No more sorrowing, sighing or grieving. No more doubts, fears, trials or temptations. No more likeness to the earthly, or unlikeness to the heavenly. As they have borne the image of the earthly, so shall they bear the image of the heavenly.

5. The saints in their immortal state shall all of them be perfectly like their Savior, and consequently like each other. What a wonderful change! Well may the apostle say, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." How much we mourn and lament our present unlikeness to him; but then every child of the resurrection shall shine in the perfect image of him who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

But thus far we have dwelt comparatively only on the outside of our subject. Oh, that we were able to plunge into its marrow and fatness, sound its depth, rise to its summit, and speak of the infinity of its breadth and length.

They which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world are the children of the resurrection. Generation is indispensable to the development of children in nature; all the children of this world, as such, were created in one progenitive head; that head was not generated, but created with all his posterity in him; all that posterity obtained their development and position as children of this world by natural generation.

All who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead, are children of God, being the

children of the resurrection. As the relation of children can only be manifested by generation, in Genesis 5:1,2, we have the book of the generations of Adam; and in Matthew 1:1, the book of the generation of Jesus Christ. The first is an earthly generation, the other is a spiritual and chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people.

Adam's posterity are called generations, in the plural number; for in their development a long succession of generations was required. Adam begat Seth, and Seth begat Enos, and so many generations were required. Of Christ it is written, "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30)." Christ is the Everlasting Father, or immediate progenitor of all his seed, there being no grandchildren or intermediate parentage between him and them. They are all born of God. In their redemption from the world, the law, from sin, death and hell, this chosen generation, royal priesthood, and holy nation, was born in a day. That is, as we understand, that when Christ was made flesh, he was identified as the flesh of Abraham, which he took on him; when he was delivered up for our offenses, it was for the offenses of all his generation, and when he had put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and arose for our justification, his people as a church, a generation or nation, were redeemed from the former relations to the law, for they became dead to the law by his body, redeemed from the world, being no more of the world, as he is not of the world, redeemed from the flesh, being no more their own, but bought with a price. The body of the sins of the flesh being put away by the circumcision of Christ, all their relations being changed, they were, as his body (not in their individual personal experience), buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead, by the glory of the Father, we also should walk in newness of life.

Will any intelligent child of God dispute that when Christ suffered on the cross his body embodied all his people, whose sins were laid on him, and that he was so recognized by the divine law and justice of God? When that body, which embraced legally all his members, died, did not the law and justice of God regard the sentence of the law as being fully executed on the whole church, or body of Christ? Then was not that body dead? When Resurrection life came down from heaven, and Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, was not that resurrection life given to the church which he embodied? Was not the prophecy fulfilled, "My dead body shall they arise?" Was not the temple of his body raised up in three days? Was not the gracious promise verified, "After two days will he revive us; in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight?" We do not ask our readers to say that this was the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, unless they can see it to be so. But if we were not washed then, the grand object of the sacrifice failed; for "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and *cleanse it* with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing (Ephesians 5:26)." And if the church was not quickened, revived and raised up from under the wrath and dominion of the law when Christ arose for our justification, in what sense did he by that one offering forever perfect them that are sanctified? What does the apostle mean when he says that God hath quickened us *together with Christ,* and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus?

We desire not to be wise above what is written, nor to insist on any point of doctrine that is not clearly demonstrated by the Scriptures of truth; but it really appears to us that when, as our Mediatorial Head, Christ was made flesh - made of a woman, he was made under a law which held dominion over

his people, or members which were under the law, that his flesh which he took on him, and in which he suffered and died was the seed of Abraham, and embraced all of the family of mankind who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world of glory to which his resurrection opens the way, and in that flesh in which they were under the law, with all the infirmities, iniquities, sins and penalties; that when he died on the cross, he so died for us, that legally we were dead, the wrath of the law was executed in our flesh as it mantled and made incarnate our Mediatorial Head. In our flesh he died, our flesh was dead. Our relation was to an earthly Adam, to Moses, to the law of sin and death, to guilt and condemnation. Dead to the law by his body in which he suffered; the body of the sins of our flesh cut off forever by the circumcision of Christ, so that in him we are no more known in our fleshly relations, marrying or being given in marriage. No more fleshly distinctions of sex, classes or conditions, for we are all one in him. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." Now if Christ died our death under the law which we had transgressed, and we with him are baptized into his death, has he risen from that death and left his members behind? Or did he not rather in his resurrection destroy death, and him that had the power of death; did he not completely abolish death, and bring life and immortality to light when he arose?

We have seen the people of God, in their legal relations, convicted of guilt, condemned and executed in their legal representative. But God has said, These, his dead men, shall live, together, with his dead body they shall arise. Christ, their second Adam, *is made* a quickening spirit (I Corinthians 15:45). He *was made flesh,* and in that flesh he *was made* a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death, that he by the grace of God might taste death for every man, by him represented as Captain of their salvation. And he *was made* perfect through suffering, and has forever perfected

them that are sanctified (Hebrews 2:9; 10:14). And now, in his resurrection and exaltation, is he "of God *made unto us* wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption (I Corinthians 1:30)." "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time."

The children of the resurrection then are begotten children, and therefore the relationship is vital. Children may be recognized in a family by adoption, but adoption simply imparts none of the life of the foster parent to the adopted child. But the children of the resurrection are partakers of resurrection life and immortality. These children of the resurrection, being begotten by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, could not fail to be brought forth, quickened and animated by the power of the resurrection, by which they are begotten of God. Begotten of God, they are the children of God, and by him begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, makes them the children of the resurrection. So then they are children of God, being the children of the resurrection, just as our Savior said to the Sadducees. And as the children of God, and of the resurrection, they cannot fail to be accounted worthy of that world where all fleshly distinctions and earthly influences will be unknown, and where there will be no marrying or giving in marriage.

This text in Peter has a much deeper signification than some commentators have given it. We cannot believe, as some have said, that such language was used by the Holy Ghost merely to express the relief experienced by the desponding

disciples, when they became convinced that their Lord has risen from the dead. Neither their despondency or their assurance could change the facts. Whether they were aware of it or not, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ had by his resurrection begotten them, not only to a lively or vital hope, but to an immortal inheritance that can neither be corrupted nor fade away.

Resurrection life from the God and Father of our Mediatorial Head was implanted, conveyed beyond the possibility of failure, made certain to all the members of Christ by his resurrection from the dead. This communication of the life and immortality of God the Father, in quickening and raising him from the dead, is called a begetting him and them from the dead, in their own order: Christ the first fruits, and afterwards them that are Christ's at his coming. Paul, in presenting this subject to the saints, says, "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you that feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent," etc. He then speaks of his being put to death, and taken down from the tree, and laid in a sepulchre, and then adds, " But God raised him from the dead," in fulfillment of what was written in the second Psalm. "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus, as it is written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee (Acts 13:32-33)." This promise was made, not to Christ in distinction from his members, but to those children of the fathers who were included in the promise; and the resurrection of the crucified body of Christ was in fulfillment of it to these children. The same resurrection life and immortality which quickened his body, destroyed death, abolished death, and swallowed up death in victory, for all his members. Christ existed as the Son, or Word of God, before

he was made flesh, or took on him the seed of Abraham, by being made of a woman, and under the law.

But the words, *begotten, born,* etc., in these Scriptures are expressly used in reference to his resurrection from the dead. As also, "first begotten (Hebrews 1:6);" "first begotten of the dead (Revelations 1:5);" "first born among many brethren (Romans 8:29);" "first born of every creature (Colossians 1:15)." All these words are applied to the resurrection of Christ, by the power, glory and immutability of the Father. Christ as the first begotten from the dead, the first fruits of them that slept, was raised up by the glory of the Father, as the perfect embodiment of the resurrection life and immortality of all his members. And so perfectly is that resurrection life embodied in him that the apostle declares that "He only hath immortality, dwelling in the light (I Timothy 6:16)." And he himself declares, "I am the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)." This resurrection life, begotten of the Eternal Father, brings immortality to all his church, and when this life from the Father brought him up from the dead, from under the law, and in the newness and immortality of an endless life, in that resurrection all the election of grace are and were begotten, and their eternal inheritance is and was secured to them, and they are kept by the power of God for it. Begotten of God and born of the resurrection, they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Lengthy as we have made this article, we have not expressed all we desire to say, and we propose to resume the subject soon, and show from the Scriptures that in our spiritual birth we are made partakers of the resurrection life which was begotten by his resurrection, and by the indwelling of this resurrection life, as the first fruits of the Spirit, we are sealed unto the day of redemption of our bodies, which by the power of this endless life shall, at the coming of our Lord, be

changed and fashioned like his glorious body. "But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit which dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11)."

Middletown, N.Y
May 1, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 182 – 190

CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION.

(CONCLUDED)

The word *children* always signifies relationship, derived and dependent existence, made manifest by the generation and birth of a life previously hidden in the loins of a progenitor, in the development of which the children derive their life from the parent. The children of the resurrection then derive their resurrection life and immortality from the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by and through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. This resurrection life was given to all the members of Christ's body, in him, their head, when he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father. It was typically prefigured by the exceedingly precious and costly ointment which was poured upon the head of Aaron; though poured on the head, its unctuous power was applied to all the body. It ran down his beard and descended to the skirts of his garments, so that his whole priestly body and all his members participated in the same anointing. So the resurrection life of the church of God was poured on our crucified Lord, as the Head of his body, the church, and from and through him descended to all who by him do believe in God who raised him from the dead. All therefore who are partakers of the resurrection life of Christ are the children of God, being children of the resurrection. As we have already shown from I Peter 1:3, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance of immortality, incorruptible, and which cannot fade away. Being begotten of God by this resurrection, they are all manifestly God's begotten children, who are born of the resurrection. This

seed is incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Peter says, "God hath begotten us according to his abundant mercy," and Paul says, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might shew the riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:4-7)." Begotten of God by the resurrection of Christ, ages to come are and were required to bring into manifestation that holy seed, that chosen generation, royal priesthood and holy nation, in their resurrection life and union with their risen and glorified head. "Ages to come" were necessary to develop, by a first and second birth, all the chosen and redeemed family of God. The first birth to manifest them in the flesh, and in their legal condemnation as sinners of Adam's race, dead in sins, and needing to be redeemed, washed from pollution and guilt, and cleansed by the blood of Christ: and in their second birth, by the Spirit, as children of the resurrection of Christ, in him raised up, from guilt, despair and death, and freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

In this development, as well as in that of their final resurrection, there is an established order, and every one of them shall be in his own order. "Christ the first fruits, afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming (I Corinthians 15:23)."

In the development of the power of the resurrection of the Son of God, in the quickening of his members, we receive the first fruits of this quickening or resurrection spirit when we are called by grace, and born of the Spirit. Resurrection life and power is given us in that new birth, and this spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead is implanted and dwells in us as an earnest of our spiritual inheritance in ultimate glory.

By this spirit we are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is, to the redemption of our bodies, which are destined to be raised up and made spiritual and immortal, and like Christ's risen body in their final resurrection. "But, if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you (Romans 8:11)." The immortal spirit of the resurrection dwells in all the children of God from the time of their new birth, and seals them for the certain resurrection of their bodies. This apostles says further: "For as many as are led by the spirit of God," (the spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, consequently the spirit of the resurrection), "they are the sons of God; for we have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but the spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba, Father." Now, although we have this Spirit which bears witness that we are sons of God and heirs of immortality, we have it as the first fruits, or as the earnest of a full and perfect inheritance which is reserved for us in heaven. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him (I John 3:2)." "The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body (Romans 8:14-23)." The first fruits of the resurrection life is given when we are born of the Spirit and incorruptibility of the resurrection of Christ. "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what the exceeding greatness of his power to usward, who believe, according to

the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places."

Thus we are informed that the quickening power of God, by which we believe, is the same resurrection power which raised up Christ from the dead, and set him in the heavenly places. This quickening resurrection spirit is begotten of God, in the resurrection of Christ, and the power of his resurrection is developed in the new birth of every saint, and consummated in its power in the final quickening of the bodies of his saints, and in fashioning them like his own spiritual, immortal, resurrected and glorious body. Well might the apostle sum up the ultimatum of all that he desired for time and eternity, in the comprehensive words used by him in Philippians 3:8-14: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Having known the power of the Savior's resurrection, in being raised up from a state of death in trespasses and sins, and from the curse and dominion of the law, and born into the resurrection life and liberty of the sons of God, there is still before the eye of his faith, far away in the distance, an object which he desires, a mark on which to keep his steadfast eye, and the prize of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus. In his risen and exalted Jesus he sees the mark, and to be conformed to that likeness is the highest aspiration of his desires. The certainty of the final attainment is presented to the faith of God's people in

the assurance that "Whom he (God) did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." The exaltation of the Son of God, from his humiliation and subordination in our flesh to the law, and from the legal place which he occupied when in the flesh, up to the heavenly places of the gospel, and to the honor, power, dominion and glory of the right hand of the majesty of the Father, presents to our faith the mark, and the predestinated conformity of all the saints to the image of him who is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. The image of the invisible God is the mark, the pattern, the point of glory secured to all the children of the resurrection. This security is found in their being begotten to this lively, or vital, hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. To be begotten of God implies the implantation of the living incorruptible seed of life and immortality to us, in Christ, when he raised him from the dead. Are we then children of the resurrection? If so, then are we the children of him who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, legitimately and vitally so, for all the children of the resurrection are begotten of him by the resurrection.

In the order of development of this generative resurrection life, Christ is the first born among many brethren. The first fruits of them that slept. The first born from the dead. (See Colossians 1:18; I Corinthians 15:20; and Revelations 1:5.) In all things he must have the preeminence. But in him, as the first fruit, all the resurrection life of all his church has gone up to heaven, and there our life is hid with him in God. Begotten of God in him, we are preserved in him, and he is our resurrection and our Life, if we are the children of the resurrection.

None can be children of the resurrection but the children of God, because all such children are begotten of God and

quickened from the dead by the resurrection, therefore all who are born of the Spirit become dead to the law by the body of Christ, and are married to him who is risen from the dead, that they should bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7:4). In a legal marriage, in the flesh, the two become one flesh. But that which is joined unto the Lord is one spirit (I Corinthians 6:16,17). If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his. But if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; created in Christ Jesus, born of his resurrection life, and partaker of his immortality, and so perfectly identified that because he lives they shall live also. He who was made flesh, in his incarnation, is made a quickening spirit in his resurrection, as all the spiritual life bestowed on them is given them in him, and was most gloriously illustrated in his resurrection. Hence is it declared, "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." As surely as all the children of the flesh were made sinners by the transgression of Adam, ages before any of us were born, so surely are all the children of the resurrection made righteous by the obedience of one, Jesus Christ. And as certainly as it is that death by sin has passed upon all the posterity of the earthly Adam, so certainly has life and immortality come upon all the spiritual posterity of our Lord Jesus Christ, by and through his resurrection. For he was delivered for our offenses, and raised from the dead for our justification. When he bore their griefs, and carried their sorrows, and bore the chastisement of their peace, with his stripes they were perfectly healed, when his soul was poured out unto death. He even then saw his seed, and knew them that are his, and by his knowledge, said the God of truth, shall my righteousness servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Seeing his seed, he saw also of the travail of his soul, and was satisfied. Read Isaiah 53.

Now, whether the word *regeneration,* which occurs but barely twice in the Bible, refers to the begetting of the Son of God

from the dead, and his being the first born from the dead, and the resurrection life of Christ secured to all his seed, constituting them the children of the resurrection, or not, is not so important for us to know and comprehend as it is that we should know and gratefully acknowledge that when Jesus arose from the dead, in his resurrection the portals of immortal glory were opened to all who are accounted worthy of that world, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

One word more. "If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things of the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory (Colossians 3:1-4)."

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 191 – 195

CHRIST: THE ANTITYPE OF ADAM

"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honor; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." – Heb. ii. 9.

Our excellent brother, Elder David W. Patman, of Georgia, has made some very appropriate remarks on the above text, and in his conclusion expressed a desire to hear from us on the same subject. We have not the vanity to presume that we can improve upon what he has written on the subject, but feeling a desire to gratify him, we will attempt to offer a few remarks, in perfect harmony with what he has said. In this connection the inspired writer of the epistle shows that all the knowledge that mortals ever had, or ever can have, of the things of the eternal Spirit, is by revelation from God. God spake to the patriarchs and their children, under the old dispensation, by the prophets. The prophets spake as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost; and Peter says, The Spirit of Christ in them did signify the suffering he was to endure, and the glory which should follow. The same God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son. The whole fullness of the eternal Godhead being identified with and comprehended in Christ, the revelations of the Son are essentially the same, as to their emanation, as those which were made by the prophets. That is, they all came from God. But the apostle shows that there is a peculiar dignity attached to the communications made to us by the Son of God, on account of the superior greatness of the Son. The wide disparity between the prophets, or even the angels of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, is clearly set forth as a reason why we should give the more earnest heed

to the things which we have heard from him, than to the words spoken by angels, &c. Christ, who is absolutely God, as well as man, and Mediator between God and men, is worthy of more profound reverence, when speaking to us personally, than the angels, or prophets, by whose mouths God has been pleased to speak to the fathers.

In setting forth more clearly the supreme glory of the Mediatorial office of the Son of God, among other strong arguments, allusion is made to Adam, as the figure of him that was to come. Particularly in that dignity which the Creator bestowed on Adam, in setting him over the works of his hands, giving him dominion over the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fishes of the deep. In all this Adam was crowned with glory and honor, as the type of Christ. But man this being in honor, did not therein abide, and we see not all things put under him. But while we may now look in vain for that honor of Adam's primeval state, we are in the gospel presented with the glorious antitype, in whom all that was said of Adam's dignity is fully realized in its spiritual and prophetic allusion to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven.

"*But we see Jesus*." Who sees him? Not everybody; for this epistle was not written to everybody. It is addressed to "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," &c. None can see Jesus, especially in his exaltation and crowned with power and glory, unless they are taught of God. Paul says, When it pleased God, &c., to reveal his Son in me. Again, God who commanded the light out shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. John says, He was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. These are the only descriptions of characters to whom the address is made, or to whom these words apply.

"*Who was made a little lower than the angels*." Those unto whom a revelation of Christ is made, have a view of him in his glory, and in his humiliation. He is revealed to their faith as the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace, and to them he is also made known as the man of sorrows, who was acquainted with grief. They see him, according to chapter first, and verse third, as the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; as the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God. They see him made a little lower than the angels, by his incarnation; for the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He whose glory had filled the heavens from everlasting, was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

But why this humiliation?

"*For the suffering of death*." The assumption of the nature of angels would not have brought him under the law that his people had transgressed; it was necessary that he should take part of the same flesh and blood, in which his children had transgressed the law, that he might be legally identified with them in their law state. Hence it is written, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," &c. As the great object of his incarnation was to redeem his people, by doing and suffering all that the law required; he was made lower than the angels. This by no means implies that the glory of his eternal Deity, or his ancient Mediatorial glory, which he had with the Father before the world began, had depreciated in the smallest degree; for though in his humiliation he was found in fashion as a man, and humbled

himself and learned obedience, and became obedient even unto death, and that the ignominious death of the cross, was made sin for us who knew no sin, and was even made a curse for us. As it is written, "Cursed in every one that hangeth upon a tree"; yet at the same time he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, and was acknowledged by the Father in that equality, even in issuing his death-warrant, if so we may speak, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." While hanging on his cross, all heaven glowed with the radiance of his unfading glory.

"*Crowned with glory and honor*." In his incarnation he was recognized by the law, by divine justice, by the eternal Father, and by all the shining hosts of heaven, as the Son of God. The darkened skies, the quaking earth, the rending rocks, the opening graves and the raising dead, together with the sundered veil of the temple, proclaimed in the most emphatic language, This was the Son of God! He was crowned as the antitype of Adam, with glory and honor; for all power in heaven and in earth was vested in him; and by virtue of his coronation, he hath power to lay down his life, and to take it up again. But in his suffering of death he is crowned with the glory and honor of complete success; the full accomplishment of all that was designed to be affected, his people completely redeemed, and by his one suffering perfected forever. A deathless victory was achieved over sin, death and hell, and all his enemies were vanquished forever.

"*That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man*." It was only by the grace of God that a vicarious sacrifice could be admitted for the redemption of the people of God; that grace had reigned in righteousness in the counsel of eternity; in the election of grace; in the predestination of his members to salvation through him; in the love which the Father has bestowed on them, that hey

should be called the sons of God, and heirs of immortality. Not by the merits or the works of men, but by the Grace of God, did he taste death for every man. That is, as explained in the next verse, "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons into glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." To him was committed the work of redeeming many sons, and of bringing them to glory. In order to accomplish this he must of necessity taste death for them all. If one of them had been missed, and left to work his way from under the guilt of sin and the curse of the law, to glory, that one would have been lost forever, and the family of God could never have been complete. But it was the will of the Father, That of all he had given him, he should lose nothing, but raise them up at the last day; and it was the will of the Son, That all that the Father had given him should be with him, and see his glory, which he had with the Father before the world began.

Middletown, N.Y.
Jan. 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

CHRIST THE SAVIOR.

Is it expressly declared in the scriptures that Christ is the Savior of all men, in any sense? In our reply to F. in the 8th No. of the current vol. we acknowledged that we had not been able to find the passage (in. the scriptures) where it is expressly stated that Christ is the Savior of all men, in any sense. In our last number Brother Mitchell of Alabama has desired us to write more fully upon this point. On reviewing what we have already written on the subject, we doubt whether we have not already been more full than clear upon the subject; for after having filled two pages with our remarks, our brother has not been able to understand us. The difficulty seems to be that we should in the same connection say that, "Of believers, **HE** is the Savior in a sense differing from that in which he is the Savior of *all men.*"

We will now try to be as clear and explicit as possible on the point. Our correspondent F. had said that it was expressly stated that Christ was the Savior of all men, *in some sense.* We designed to show that the passage (1 Tim. iv. 10,) to which we suppose our correspondent alluded, did not speak of Christ as the Savior of all men, but that the expression was made of the "Living God." While we firmly believe that Christ is God, we believe that God is frequently spoken of in the scriptures where Christ is not intended; as, for example, where Christ himself cried out, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?" "To your Father and to my Father, to your God and to my God." "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach glad tidings to the meek," &c. In these and in a multitude of passages, God is named where Christ is not brought to view; and we now venture to affirm that there is not a passage in the scriptures of truth where the common, or providential

salvation of the creatures of God, is ascribed to Christ. The *name Christ* signifies *anointed,* and Christ is anointed, not to be the Savior of all men, and specially of them that believe, but he is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek; to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion; to give unto them beauty for ashes; the oil of joy for mourning; the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness; the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. See Isa. lxi. 1,2,3. His name, Christ, always signifies his anointing of the Father, and the anointing always signifies his official relationship to his church. As the anointed King he stands related to a kingdom which is not of this world, and that kingdom is his church. Anointed as a priest, he is the High Priest of our profession, standing in the order of Melchisedec, and not in the order of Aaron. Every participant in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, is saved with an everlasting salvation, and shall never come into condemnation in a world without end.

Of that common or providential salvation ascribed to God as the Living God, the Jehovah, the God of creation and providence, all men and all beings are partakers. It is universal; embracing men, angels and devils; things animate and things inanimate, visible and invisible, past, present, and to come.

Of this common universal salvation, believers are sharers; but what they enjoy of this salvation is not in consequence of their relation to Christ, but rather that of their creatureship; and they enjoy it only as do the other creatures of God.

But that salvation which is in Christ Jesus our Lord is received by the saints with, but not without, eternal glory.

Brother Mitchell may tell us that in the passage, 1 Tim. iv. 10, the general salvation of all men, and the special salvation of some men, are ascribed to one and the same being. Very true; they are ascribed to the Living God, or rather the Jehovah, the Living God, who, as we have attempted to show, is the Savior of all his creatures, in a providential point of view; and he is also the Savior of his people in a special and peculiar sense, insomuch as he, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, "hath saved us" (the people of God, believers,) "and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." - 2 Tim. i. 9. The former he has saved in his general providence, the latter he has saved in Christ Jesus their Lord.

We indulge the hope that our brother will comprehend our meaning, and be enabled to discriminate between that salvation which embraces all men, and that which is in Christ, embracing them that believe. And if he can find a portion of divine revelation, either "expressly" or implied, stating that Christ is "in any sense the Savior of all men," he will forward it to us with the same readiness that we give him our views upon the subject of salvation.

But as brother Mitchell has referred to some other scriptures presenting difficulties to his mind, we will pass to consider them briefly, for our present limits will not admit of extensive remarks. The first passage is Heb. ii. 9, "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." Much as this text has been perverted by arminians and universalists, there is not a passage perhaps in the bible that more fully sustains

the doctrine of the federal union of Christ and his people, or more fully sustains the doctrine which constituted the theme of our reply to F. In this text and its connection the inspired writer quotes from the Psalms, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him," &c.; the power and dignity with which man in his creation was crowned, and the dominion given him over the works of God's hands, wrought in creation; and then shows the application of this testimony to Christ, agreeing with our remarks in which we labored to show that Adam was the figure of him that was to come. The dignity and dominion given to Adam was figurative of the spiritual power, dignity and dominion, which was to be developed in the Anointed, even in Christ; and that which we cannot see literally fulfilled in man, we see gloriously illustrated in Christ. First, his humiliation: "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels"; then his exaltation: "Thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands," &c. And now we see this. That is, we see Jesus in his incarnation made of a woman, made under the law which his children had transgressed, and we see him thus humbled for the suffering of death. We see also the dignity of his coronation, or of his anointing, as the legal head and true representative of "many sons," whom he was anointed to bring to glory, that he by the grace (free favor) of God should taste death *for every man.* Can it be possible that brother Mitchell's mind is dark in relation to the term *every man* in this place? Let him carefully and prayerfully read the context, and see that every man of Adam's posterity is not intended; for these things we are assured are not seen fulfilled in Adam, in man, or in the son of man, only as Christ, the anti-typical Adam, becomes the son of man by being made a little lower than the angels. The men are distinctly called sons and children in the immediate connection. As we have in our previous numbers shown, and brother Mitchell has admitted the correctness of our position, that Adam as the seminal head of the human family was a figure of Christ as the

seminal head of his spiritual progeny, that which is not fulfilled in the former is manifestly fulfilled in the latter, and hence it immediately follows, "For it became him for whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Here we see that he was not only *crowned* or *anointed,* or constituted Christ, and made lower than the angels that he might taste death for, but also bring to glory many sons, over whom he presided as the Captain of their salvation; "For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them *brethren.*

Does brother Mitchell, or any other intelligent christian, think that all the natural seed of Adam are the sanctified brethren of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that they have proceeded from the same origin in the sense expressed in the above? If so, they may possibly conclude that he as the Captain of their salvation has tasted death for them all, and, of course, will bring them to glory. But those who favor that view will find a damper when they read John viii. 38, 39, 41, 42, and 44. In these scriptures Christ himself declared to a portion of Adam's posterity .that they were not of God, and that they were of their father the devil. We do not understand our Lord to say that these were not the creatures of God, any more than that they were not the natural offspring of Abraham; but they were not the children of God in that peculiar sense in which his people, those for whom he tasted death, who had derived a spiritual life from the same source whence Christ in his mediatorial character emanated. He declared that he proceeded and came from God; and addressing himself to that same God concerning those for whom, by the grace of God, he tasted death, he said, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," &c. As Christ, he is the Captain of no other company. The High Priest of no other profession; the Head of no other body; the Husband of no other wife; the Shepherd of no other flock; King of no other subjects; and

we hesitate not to add emphatically, by the authority of the scriptures of eternal truth, He is the Savior of no other people in any sense whatever.

The other passages proposed by brother Mitchell we must leave for some future opportunity. Meanwhile we will add, there is, in our opinion, no subject embraced in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ of more vital importance than that of the atonement; nor do we know of any so frequently perverted. With a wrong view of the atonement no man can hold right views of the plan of salvation.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
July 1, 1846.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 654 - 659

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

EXPERIMENTAL religion is becoming more and more unpopular with the work-mongrel religionists of the present time. Very little or nothing is said on this all important subject in the discourses or through the presses of the modern fashionable professors of religion. How true are the words of our Lord: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." The doctrine of Christ and the inventions of men can never harmonize. The worshipers of mammon, while they pretend to see a virtue in money or human works to save sinners from the wrath to come, can entertain no just conceptions of the value of a Savior's blood and righteousness, nor of the absolute necessity of the Spirit's work in regeneration. For every one that can at this day be found reiterating the words of Jesus, "Ye must be born again," twenty, we presume, may be found crying, Ye must give your substance for the conversion of the world. If those who appeal to your pockets for the salvation of sinners really believe the doctrine that they make their unceasing theme, they cannot but regard regeneration by the Spirit of God as an unimportant thing. Who that believes what Daniel Dodge asserted a few years ago before the Philadelphia Association, viz.: that our money may be invested in a stock that will insure in this life a hundred per cent., and in the world to come life everlasting, [! ! !] can regard the blood of Christ as possessing the only power that can possibly save a guilty sinner from eternal perdition, and the name of Jesus as the only name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved! According to the new religious theory, if a man will give his money to support the unscriptural inventions of professedly religious men. though it be to aid in operations in open hostility to the doctrine of Christ, he is considered pious; and if he will connect himself with the various anti-scriptural societies, he is considered a suitable person for church

membership. If we are supposed to be wrong in this conclusion, we would desire to be informed when, where and by whom any such person has been rejected, who has manifested a disposition to be connected with any of the popular churches of our age.

One of the preachers of our acquaintance said, when requested to relate his christian experience, that it was so long ago he had forgotten the particulars of it. Another said, in a public discourse, that the notion entertained by some people that we must experience a certain exercise or change, was a falsehood coined by Satan to cheat men out of their souls and added, "When Christ called Matthew he did not wait for any such change, but immediately followed him." Such, are the sentiments with which the modern pulpits ring in regard to the work of regeneration. But christians are not to be brow beaten out of what God has taught them. They speak (upon the subject of the new birth, at least) what they do know, and testify what they have seen.

With what satisfaction do the children of God, from time to time, recall to mind the first exercises of their mind when quickened by the Holy Ghost. They do not forget the time of the wormwood and the gall, their souls still have them in remembrance, therefore they have hope.

New Veronn, N. Y.
January 1, 1844.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 2

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

"Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." – Psalm cxvi. 7.

WHILE the arminian tribes of anti-christ are engaged with might and main to connect the Jewish covenant with the statutes of our state and nation in order to establish the first day of the week as a legal Sabbath, and to coerce the consciences of our citizens into an observance of their improvement up on the divine law, how pleasant it is to the children of the heavenly kingdom to contemplate the substance, or antitype of which the Jewish Sabbath was only a shadow. All the rites and ceremonies of the old covenant which enjoined the Sabbath implied an external or outward performance of duties in which the children of Israel were to be perpetually engaged, until the sceptre should depart from Judah, and the lawgiver from between his feet; but the law and its requisition was not of faith, neither did it require faith, but obedience, perfect and unremitting. To establish a kind of worldly religion in the absence of faith, and of the Spirit's work in the heart, it is not strange that the modern usurpers of Moses' seat should manifest so strong a propensity to revive the dead works of the law, the abrogated rites of Judaism, and have them incorporated with the laws of our land, and thus pave the way for a national church in our country. But a soul enlightened by the Holy Spirit, is released from the bondage of the law, and ushered into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. In the spiritual devotions of the inspired Psalmist, we trace some sublime predictions of our great Redeemer, his labor and suffering under the law, his bitter death, triumphant resurrection and entrance into his rest; for he hath set down at the right hand of the majesty on high. And what appears so clearly to point to the incarnation, death, resurrection and exaltation of

Christ in this beautiful subject, points out also the Sabbatic jubilee of all the saints of God, which the blessed gospel brings to light.

Compare the connection of the text with the experience of the saints who have ceased from their own works. “The sorrows of death compassed me; I found trouble and sorrow.” When was this the case? Ah, when the arrows of the Lord had entered the heart; or at the time when the quickened sinner was brought to see and feel the terrors of the law of God, to hear and tremble at its thundering; to feel a load of guilt and sin sinking his stricken heart in deep despair. Death with its gloomy sorrow as the consequence and wages of sin, Presents its awful terrors, compassing the distressed and despairing soul with sorrows; the pains of damned spirits seized with desperate grasp the helpless victim, and tire contemplated destiny of banished so&s seemed already to have begun its work of retribution. Here was a time of labor, of toil, but alas, the struggle of the soul was unavailing.

“Stern Justice cried, with frowning face,
This mountain (Sinai, or the law) is no hiding place.”

Not all the poor creature could do, could satisfy the rigid demands of the law of God, assuage the anguish which he felt, or afford a refuge for his soul. The pains of hell had taken hold with such a deadly grasp, the very best obedience the victim could render to the law would not answer, but still he labored, sought for peace, for comfort; but what did be find? “I found trouble and sorrow;” and these were all that he could find. The soul became weary, distressed, fainting find exhausted, finding no more to rest upon in the law, or in his works, than Noah’s dove could find when absent from the ark. These exercises of the soul, produced by the work of the Spirit, a breathing of desire to God for deliverance. “Then

called I upon the name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." This calling upon God for deliverance does not take place until the soul is made sensible that there is deliverance no where else. The Spirit in whose hands he is, directs the supplication, and that Spirit opens to the sinking soul the way of life through Jesus Christ. At which he is enabled to break forth in the language of the next succeeding verse of this Psalm. "Gracious is the Lord." O, yes, the plan of grace now breaks forth upon his soul; his heart is ravished, his burden removed; joy and thanks giving, love and wonder, now overwhelm his soul. But how, he now inquires, can such deliverance be in justice extended to a wretch so vile, one whose condemnation was so clearly sealed by the law? But, lo! the Savior's blood appears, and he is made to add, "And righteous, yea, our God is merciful! The Lord preserveth the simple," and as a illustration of this, he pleads his experience, "I was brought low, and he helped me." The all-inviting charms of Jesus are now presented, and sweeter than the melody of angel voices sounds the words, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest to your souls." To which his joyful leaping heart responds: "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." his Sabbath is here begun, his servile labors are ended; he enters into rest. No more to think his own thoughts, or speak his own words; for it is God that worketh in him, to will and to do of his own good pleasure. No more shall he gather sticks, kindle fires, or attempt to warm himself by what he can do; but finds in Christ a sun of righteousness, emitting, upon him the golden rays of heavenly light, of burning love; and the fruits of the Spirit are unto him "Love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith." This is a Sabbath indeed, the observance of which is dictated by a law which is written in his heart, and enforced by the governing power of grace reigning in his

soul. This is the day which the Lord has made, and he will rejoice and be glad in it.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
July 15, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 566 – 569

THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

(Continued.)

IN the preceeding number, we offered some remarks upon the preceding verses of the Psalm from which the above text is taken, in which we not only regarded the theme as predictive of the sufferings and triumphs of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also expressive of the experience of all the children of God, who have been delivered from the power of darkness, the bondage and works of the law, and finally brought experimentally into the enjoyment of the christian Sabbath, where they are enabled to rest from their own works, and rely alone upon the finished salvation of our God. That all the sabbatic seasons under the law, and especially the seventh day Sabbath, were typical of the gospel rest, is so fully, clearly, and emphatically settled by the inspired writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, that he must be but a very superficial reader who does not discover the end of the shadow, and the introduction of the substance, gospel rest. In Heb. iv. 4, the apostle speaks of the seventh day, in which God rested from his works, &c., and brings forward that rest, in connection with the oath of God, that the carnal unbelieving Israelites should not enter into it. Now it is very certain that the apostle did not intend to say, that the carnal Israelites were prohibited by the oath of God from observing the seventh day Sabbath as enjoined in the fourth commandment of the 1ecalogtie, as well as in many other special precepts given by Moses; for no such oath as that had been taken; and no penal laws which our legislatures can enact or enforce can mike the citizens of our states keep a seventh (lay, or a first day Sabbath with as much exactness as did the carnal Israelites the seventh day Sabbath which God enjoined upon them. But although the Jews kept the Jewish Sabbath according to law, they did not, nor could they

enter into the Lord’s rest, because of unbelief. Unbelief was no impediment to their observing the seventh day as they were commanded; but in a state of unbelief, or in the absence of that faith of which Christ is the author and finisher, no man can enter into his rest. The Sabbath under the law was among the carnal ordinances, and belonged to a worldly sanctuary, [see Heb. iv. 1-11,] and it was therefore adapted to their carnal state. But that rest which remaineth, (after the withdrawing of the carnal ordinances) is spiritual, and no man having not the Spirit can enter into it. There is just as great difference between the Sabbath enjoined by the law on Israel, and the christian Sabbath, as that between a bleeding lamb offered upon the Jewish altars, and the Lamb of God, whom they prefigured; and yet it seems to be one of the most difficult lessons for professing christians to learn, that the gospel Sabbath is a spiritual anti-typical rest: designed not as a rest for the flesh, but for the spiritual creation. The idea of the seventh day Sabbath being continued, with the change only of the day from the seventh to the first, is perfectly preposterous, being sustained by about the same proof as that which can be brought for changing circumcision tor baptism, and baptism for infant or sprinkling, but no more. The same arguments which are brought for a perpetuation of the Sabbath as a legal institution on any day, first or seventh, would go just as far to prove the obligation of circumcision according to Moses’ law, or the continuance of the Jewish priesthood, periodical sacrifices, &c., as they can to establish *new moons and Sabbath days*. With the same propriety might we urge upon Gentile christians the observance of the feast of the Passover as any other of those abrogated Jewish rites.

But it is argued that the Sabbath day was incorporated with the moral precepts of the law of God, and therefore is, and must of necessity be alike binding on all rational beings, throughout all time. But if this argument proves anything it

proves too much for those who use it, for if the law of the Sabbath was a moral law no circumstance nor period can change the manner or time of its observance. If it were binding by a moral precept let it be remembered that moral precepts can admit of no changes, and this argument, if valid, would establish a *seventh day*, but not a *first day* Sabbath. But are we not indebted to tradition for the notion that the ten commandments are the moral law of God? That there were precepts of a moral nature written on the tables of stone we have no disposition to deny; but that the circumstance of their being written there constituted them a moral law would imply that man was not, until the giving of the law in that form, under moral obligation to God. But the fact that death reigned from Adam to Moses, and until (or before) the law sin was in the world, fully establishes the doctrine that man was created under the law of God. The law which was given to Israel on tables of stone was given to them as a covenant in which they were distinguished from all other nations under heaven; and although there were embraced in the commandments obligations such as the Gentiles were under, yet in that particular or covenant form the ten commandments had only to do with Israel. Hence the Lord told Moses that it was a covenant which he would make with him and with the house of Israel; and it is referred to in the promise of a new covenant, that the new covenant should not be like that which he made with Israel in the day when he led them out of Egypt, &c.

Now, if there is a place in the bible where the observance of a Sabbath day is enjoined upon the Gentiles, or any Gentile, we have not been able to find it; and we will be greatly obliged to any person who will direct us to the chapter and verse. Or if it can be found we will be equally grateful for information where or when the Gentiles were ever charged with the sin of Sabbath breaking. We may as well look for

charges against them for failing to be circumcised. But had the law of the Sabbath been a moral law it would have applied as well to Gentiles as to Jews. If it were moral it could not be typical or figurative. We not only find it given expressly as God's sign between himself and the nation of Israel, to be observed by them throughout their generations, but by an apostle divinely and infallibly inspired by the Holy Ghost it is classed with *holy days, new moons, meats, drinks, hand-writing of ordinances, &c*. See Col. ii., where the apostle tells us not only that the Sabbath was a shadow, but that the substance or body of it was Christ. Then the seventh day Sabbath was not the shadow or type of a first day Sabbath., but of a real substance which is Christ. Nor are we left to grope in the dark as to the direct and immediate application, as we have before shown that the rest which heaven born souls find in Jesus Christ is the substance or body which is Christ.

In the application of this figure we see how perfectly it describes the gospel rest.

1. The typical Sabbath was given only to Israel, and to them in covenant form, arid to designate them as his peculiar people; so its anti-type is given exclusively to those who, being Christ's, are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise; as the exclusive property of those who are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

2. As the Sabbath was a part of God's covenant to Israel, so the rest to which it pointed is a new covenant provision for a new covenant people.

3. As none but the legally circumcised tribes of Israel had anything to do with the type, so none but those who are Jews inwardly, whose circumcision is that of the heart, and whose

praise is not of men but of God, can enter into this rest or anti-typical Sabbath.

4. As the keeping of the Jewish Sabbath required a strict abstinence from servile labor, so the gospel requires a perfect abstinence from all the works of the law as a ground of our justification before God.

5. As the Jewish Sabbath could not be kept on any other than the seventh day, or until the toil and labor of the six days was ended, so neither is it possible for the heirs of glory to enter into or enjoy the gospel rest until they are released from the bondage and dominion of the legal dispensation.

6. As the gathering of fuel, kindling of fires, thinking of one's own thoughts or speaking of one's own words was a desecration of that day, so the christian violates the spirit of the gospel by attempting, by what he may call means, or anything else, to furnish materials for a revival, or to kindle or get one up, or to rely on anything less or more than the gospel itself for light, warmth, comfort or defence; and so also the inventions of our own thoughts, or the utterance of words which God has not spoken, in a gospel sense is a desecration of the sacredness of the gospel Sabbath.

7. As those venders of merchandise who came from Tyre and other places to vend their wares, their victuals, &c., on the Sabbath day, interrupted the observance of the day by the children of Israel in the days of Nehemiah, so those modern venders of foreign merchandise, who come among the saints and lodge around the walls of Zion, professing to supply spiritual food for stipulated salaries, do also interrupt the true Israelites in their attendance on the privileges of the gospel, and break in upon their hours of rest. And as in the days of Nehemiah there were some Jews belonging to his company which were ever ready to encourage these trafficers on the

Sabbath days, so there are always some among the members of the gospel church ready to transgress the order of the gospel by encouraging ware speculations in divinity, to break the rest of spiritual Israel by attempting to feed them upon the leeks and onions of Egypt, or the fish and other commodities of Tyre.

In the epistle to the Hebrews we find an exhortation to the New Testament saints to fear, lest any of them should seem to come short of the promised rest, after the example of those who could not enter into rest because of unbelief: “For we which have believed,” says the apostle, “do enter into rest.” And again, “Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” All christians have to maintain a conflict with doubts and unbelief; and when doubts and unbelief prevail, they cannot enjoy their Sabbatic rest, but seem to come short of it. When, however, these doubts are removed, and their faith is in full exercise, it lays hold. on the promises, and they are brought into the sweet enjoyment of rest to their souls. And all christians have found that in proportion to the power and prevalence of faith in them, their souls have found. rest in Jesus. But alas! how can they rest on him as their sure foundation, when they lack the evidence that they are his or while through unbelief they are led to doubt that he is their foundation, or that they have any special interest in him? Nothing can be a more direct violation of the gospel Sabbath, than the observance of the abrogated ordinances and rites of the old covenant; and Paul had just cause to fear that he had bestowed on his brethren labor in vain, when he saw them observing days and months and times and years, which course had a direct tendency to entangle them in the yoke of bondage. He commanded the Colossian brethren to let no man judge them in relation to holy days, new moons and Sabbaths; and enjoined on them to touch not, taste not and handle not any of these abolished rites; they belonged to the

six days of labor, but not to the Sabbath of the Lord. The Jewish Sabbath continued but for a day, and was succeeded by days of labor and toil; but the gospel Sabbath is that in which there remaineth rest for the people of God. The gospel Sabbath dawned upon the church of God more than eighteen hundred years ago – when the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and must endure for ever. It is neither confined to the mountain of Samaria, nor to the ancient city of Jerusalem; nor is it to be observed or enjoyed on any particular days, or times, or seasons, but only as the weary soul shall be made to hear and obey the voice of Jesus, commanding him away from everything else to find rest in wearing his yoke and in bearing his burden.

There is a great stir at this time among the workmongrel tribes of anti-christ, in regard to the sanctification of the first day of the week as a Sabbath; and from the zeal which they manifest they would, if it were in their power, more heaven and earth to bring us into bondage, even upon the subject of rest. But alas for them, they have never known what it is to rest in Jesus, nor can they know it, unless they shall be born of God; for they are like the troubled sea, which cannot rest, which continually casteth up mire and dirt.

Christian brethren, have we not wandered from the place of our rest? Have we not at times been led to cry out, as the spouse, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest the flock to rest at noon; for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" – Cant. i. 7. And when we have heard the sweet response of the Beloved, saying, "Go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents," have we not in the language of our hearts ejaculated the words, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee?" Then let us "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be

not again entangled with the yoke of bondage." Let no man judge you in meats and drinks, holy days, new moons and Sabbaths. These are matters between us and our God, and for the use or abuse of which we are not amenable to our fellow-man. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshiping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; and not holding the head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are ye subject to ordinances which all are to perish with the using, after the commandments and doctrines of mens. Touch not; taste not; handle not; is the solemn admonition of the apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ. If when Christ died on the cross, to which he nailed all the hand-writing of legal ordinances, we were represented in his death, died with him, and to the law became dead by his body, if he was delivered up for our transgressions, and raised for our justification, – if he is to us the end of the law for righteousness – why should we belie our faith, and act so inconsistently with our profession, as to go back to the beggarly elements, and thereby betray a desire to be again in that bondage from which Christ has delivered us? Although Paul admits this voluntary humility, which is urged upon us in regard to abrogated rites and ordinances, *has a shew of wisdom in will worship*, it cannot have that effect in spiritual worship: let the will worshipers, arminians, workmomgers and children of the bond woman monopolize this shew of wisdom, but, my soul, come not into their secret; " Return unto thy rest, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

New Vernon, N.Y.,
August 1, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 569 – 576

THE CHRISTIAN AND WAR

[Elder William Beebe, formerly of New York State, was residing in Georgia, and attending the churches of the Old School Baptist order there when the War Between The States began. (William was ordained in Georgia just after the war.) He served in the Confederate Army until captured by Northern forces and was imprisoned in Ohio. The following correspondence with his father, Elder Gilbert Beebe, was the results of his disagreement with a circular letter from the Warwick Association upon the subject of brethren taking up arms against brethren. That this was then, and is now, a difficult subject can be seen from the excellent points made by both writers. They were father and son, fellow yoke servants with Christ, brethren in the church of the Living God, and yet abiding in nature under opposing and bitterly antagonistic governments. Men of lesser gifts, or lacking the long-suffering nature of their Redeemer might well have been much more vitriolic and mean spirited in their arguments. - EJP]

- Christians and War October 15, 1866
- Christians and War Again December 1, 1866
- The Christian and the Sword February 1, 1867

[Though these letters were in direct reference to as stated above, "The War Between the States". Truth is truth is truth!! What is truth in reference to this war above, is also truth in reference to any war that comes about. Whether it is the "War on Terror" that is going on now, or one that will probably be right around the corner. The truth of Scripture does not change with the times or situations. As you read

these wonderful letters and responses, please keep that in mind. - Tom]

THE CHRISTIAN AND WAR

[Elder William Beebe, formerly of New York State, was residing in Georgia, and attending the churches of the Old School Baptist order there when the War Between The States began. (William was ordained in Georgia just after the war.) He served in the Confederate Army until captured by Northern forces and was imprisoned in Ohio. The following correspondence with his father, Elder Gilbert Beebe, was the results of his disagreement with a circular letter from the Warwick Association upon the subject of brethren taking up arms against brethren. That this was then, and is now, a difficult subject can be seen from the excellent points made by both writers. They were father and son, fellow yoke servants with Christ, brethren in the church of the Living God, and yet abiding in nature under opposing and bitterly antagonistic governments. Men of lesser gifts, or lacking the long-suffering nature of their Redeemer might well have been much more vitriolic and mean spirited in their arguments. - EJP]

- Christians and War October 15, 1866
- Christians and War Again December 1, 1866
- The Christian and the Sword February 1, 1867

[Though these letters were in direct reference to as stated above, "The War Between the States". Truth is truth is truth!! What is truth in reference to this war above, is also truth in reference to any war that comes about. Whether it is the "War on Terror" that is going on now, or one that will

probably be right around the corner. The truth of Scripture does not change with the times or situations. As you read these wonderful letters and responses, please keep that in mind. - Tom]

CHRISTIAN VILLAGE.

IN our last number we promised to notice a short article from the *Cross and Baptist Journal,* headed as above. To this article the editor of the *Cross* directs the attention of his readers, and in doing so, has informed them of our opposition to these *fruits of missionarty enterprise.* We feel ourselves obliged to Mr. Stephens, for in this particular we think he has done us more justice than in any other reference he has ever made to us. By way of endorsing this one truth, published in the *Cross,* we will copy the editorial note, and thereto subjoin a copy of his *Christian Village:*

"We invite attention of readers to the short article on the last page, under the head 'Christian Village.' There will be seen some of the fruits of the missionary enterprise, which the "Signs of the Times" so bitterly opposes, as among the offspring of what he calls 'Arminianism.' And the editor seems to think himself bound to rebuke those engaged in such labors sharply, as if they were liars, disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." *Cross and Journal.*

"CHRISTIAN VILLAGE. - We recently published a letter from Mrs. Wade, which left her in the wilderness among the Karens. Another letter has been received from her by a friend in this country, and published in the *N. Y. Baptist Register,* from which we make the following extracts, describing her place of residence, employments, &c. The place is called the Christian Village, and is situated in the wilderness, about three days' journey north of Tavoy 'This village,' says Mrs. Wade, 'was founded by brother Mason, and

though all are not members of the church. yet it is strictly a christian village. I have been here nearly six weeks, and truly I never lived in any place in America which so well deserved the names There is not a single house where prayer is not daily offered. All ask a blessing over their simple meal; and no man woman or child takes a dose of medicine without praying God to bless it to them. And when they recover from illness, they consider it a blessing directly from God. Forty children were taught to read and write the last rainy season, so that on Lord's days the children all read" the few books they have to their parents, till about ten o'clock, when the sound of the gong calls to the zayat, where the service is similar to the evening, only much longer. In the afternoon I have an interesting Sabbath School for all the inquirers and children. At evening we meet again as usual. We have an assembly of about two hundred, fifty of whom think they have been born again; and I trust a great number of them will be thought worthy of the ordinance of baptism. Several have been inquirers for a long time, "and by a daily life give good evidence of their sincerity.'

"Mrs. Wade makes the following mention of Ko Chet-thing and Moung Shwa Moung: 'Ko Chet-thing is very happy with his family again, and all engaged in preaching the blessed gospel 'to the Karens north of Maulmein, with brother Vinton; and Moung Shwa Moung is with brother Judson, engaged in the same blessed work.'" -*Watchman.*

REMARKS.

As we plead guilty to the charge of opposing these fruits of missionary enterprise, it may be proper to give our readers some reasons for such opposition. And

First. As that which is the fruits of one thing cannot consequently be the product of another, so this christian

village, being the fruits of missionary enterprise, cannot be the fruit of grace, or product of the Holy Ghost; our enemies themselves being judges.

Second. The scriptures of truth inform us that no one can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The missionary enterprise is a mongrel beast, composed of men, money, power and labor. Man is denounced in scripture as being by nature altogether unclean, unholy, leprous from the sole of the foot even to the head, bruises and wounds and putrifying sores, his heart a fountain of corruption, a cage of unclean birds, the thoughts of his heart evil, and that continually, cursed children who cannot cease to sin. Hence if we seek for goodness, human nature says, "It is not in me!" Money, which is the next indispensible ingredient, is, by the Holy Spirit, denominated filthy lucre; the love of it, the apostle tells us, is the root of all evil; hence money, to the language of depraved human nature, responds, "It is not in me." Human power, like its parent, human nature, is corrupt, and is by the God of heaven utterly rejected from the works of building up the temple of the Lord. "Behold," says God, "the maim whose name is The Branch, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory," &c. "Not by might, nor by strength, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

But again. This power is in all points opposite to that Christ who is the power of God through faith unto salvation, as it is derived from a very different source; being that which the dragon gave unto the beast, together with his pagan seat, (Rome,) and great authority; a power to work miracles, with all signs and lying wonders, and all deceivableness in them that perish; a power to cause fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men; and last, but not least, a power to make war with the saints, and "to overcome them for a short season. Hence to look for goodness in human power is like seeking the living among the dead.

The last ingredient named is labor or works. Of these the bible mentions two kinds, viz: the works of righteousness, and the works of darkness, or the work of God, and that of men and devils. Now inasmuch as the missionary enterprise claims the honor of saving souls from the quenchiess fires of hell, it is impossible that the works of the mission enterprise should come under the first denomination, for the apostle for. bids the idea that we are saved by works of righteousness which we have done; it follows then, of course, that if any kind of works which men can perform possess any such influence, they must be the other kind, viz: works of unrighteousness, and this is grossly absurd. Thus we find, on examination of the principal component parts of the Missionary Beast, that it is unholy and unclean in all its parts, and can be productive of nothing that is in God's esteem holy and good.

Third. Another reason why we oppose the fruits of the missionary enterprise is because such, fruits are *not meet for repentance* - they do not show a work of repentance wrought in their hearts by the Spirit of the Lord, who are engaged in these operations - for certain we are that every enlightened soul that has been made partaker of that repentance which comes down from him who is exalted a Prince and Savior, to give it unto Israel with the remission or sin, will know better than to suppose that sinners can be saved by any power short of that of divine omnipotence. Full well do they remember the worm-wood and the gall; and how utterly lost and helpless they were while in that condition. They were then effectually taught by the Holy Spirit to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils. They were driven out from every refuge, until they found themselves unexpectedly in the hands of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. He brought them to his banqueting house, and his banner over them was love; here they were permitted to set down under his shadow, and they found him a refuge in distress, and a

very present help in trouble; yea, they entered into the Rock, experimentally, and hid themselves in the dust for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. These are some of the fruits meet for repentence; but oh how different from those boasted of by the missionary beast! The children of God hide themselves in the dust; they do not venture forth and attempt to perform a work for others which they were altogether unable to do for themselves, while the others, like the old Lucifer, can say, "Is not this great Babylon which I have built by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" or, like Mr. Stephens, point to his christian village in East India, and say, "There will be seen some of the fruits of the missionary enterprise?"

Fourth. The church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven, are sometimes called a city, sought out, not forsaken, &c., a city set upon a hill; but she is nowhere called a village. "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God;" she is called the perfection of beauty; but none of these things are spoken of the missionary production of human enterprise. Among the most glorious things spoken of the City of God are these words: "I, saith the Lord, will lay her stones with fair colors." "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Fifth. Another reason for our opposition, and Mr. S. may call it bitter if he please, as we expect him and his fellows, in their present wretched state, to call sweet bitter, and bitter sweet, even as they call darkness light, and light darkness, is, that this village which Mrs. Waid has christened *Christian Village,* is, if their own account be true, redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, and not with the precious blood of Christ; for if there be any truth in modern missionaryism, it will show that all the blood that was shed on Calvary would not have saved this small village had not the missionary enterprise taken hold of the work, and this

last saves, just in proportion to the amount of gold and silver which she lavishes out of her bag.

Sixth. The general features of this christian village, as they call it, bear a much more striking resemblance to a bastard dwelling in Ashdod, than to christianity, as described in the New Testament. We will point out a few particulars of dissimularity between the village and the church of Christ.

1. The church was founded by God himself. “Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone,” &c. The other was founded, we are told, by “brother Mason.”

2. In the village they are not all members; but in the true church all are members - all are Christ’s body, and members in particular.

3. Mrs. Waid has lived in this village nearly six weeks, and testifies that they are. more deserving the name they bear than any place she ever lived in in America. In the true church not one can be found who pretends to deserve the name of christian.

4. In Mrs. Waid’s church no man, woman or child takes a dose of medicine without praying God to bless it to them.. The members of the true church are not hail so formal and hypocritical. Query. - Do these Ishmaels all enter into their closets, and shut the door, when they pray? and it so, how does Mrs. W. happen to know whereof she affirms?

5. Mrs. Waid’s christian community numbers about two hundred and fifty. souls, fifty of whom *think* they have been born again, leaving the balance of four fifths who do not even think they haye been born again. But not so in the true church. “For except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God: and except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

But should we make no strictures, upon the subject of Mrs. Waid's Christian 'Village, and allow that her description of the fruits of the missionary enterprise is true, *i. e.,* they have got them to be so pious as to outstrip the American christians so far as to be far more worthy of the name, what then? Do not be alarmed, Mr. Stephens, at our bitterness, we were only about to suggest the thought that they can now do without any further aid from America, and whether it would not be well for the Yankees to cool off their zeal a little, and make an effort to extract the beam. from their own eye, if haply they may at length catch up with their Burman converts. And may we not reasonably expect that these *ardently pious* villagers will soon begin to think of reciprocating the favors which they have received from our country, and send a posse of their natives to christianize us?

But to conclude. We have no doubt that Satan can make just such christians as Mrs. W. has described, as fast, if he should half try, as a tinker can make spoons; and we very much mistake his talents, too, if he could not make more than one fifth part think they were born again. We are acquainted with some individuals who can say their prayers, read. tracts, go to meeting, pray over their victuals and over their pills, as well, as piously and as devoutly as a Catholic can say mass, or count beads, and can, in almost the same breath, curse and swear, lie, and cheat, and commit almost any kind of wickedness. From all such converts may the Lord deliver his church, and enable his children to "rebuke them sharply," as though they were liars, disobedient, evil beasts, slow bellies, and to every good work reprobate.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
April 22, 1836.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 299 – 305

CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

Dear Brother Beebe: - How are we instructed in Matthew xviii. 15, to deal with offenders?

1. Is this rule to be applied to private or to public trespasses?
2. What is meant by the words, "And if he shall hear thee"? Does this imply acknowledgment or repentance, or both?
3. As the Savior directed to take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, &c. Does this mean that the aggrieved brother shall be one of the witnesses?
4. And if he meant a private trespass, and I do not see how a private trespass can be proved, what are the two or three witnesses to establish?
5. When the case comes before the church, does the aggrieved and accused stand on the same ground of fellowship with the church, if the aggrieved brother still charges the offence, and the accused denies it?
6. What is meant by being as an heathen and a publican? Is he to be so to the aggrieved brother only, or to the whole church? We also have something on the same subject in Luke xvii. 3, 4.

In hope of eternal life, WM. WIGGINTON.
Near Frankfort, Ky., Jan., 1861.

Reply: - Such views as we have, on all scriptural subjects, we feel bound to give, especially when called upon to do so by our brethren who desire to know and walk in the truth. And those who have for many years sustained and held up

our feeble hands by their fellowship and patronage, have a claim upon the very best service we can render; but while we in all candor express the convictions of our mind upon all scriptural subjects, we hold no one obligated to indorse our views any farther than they shall find them sustained by the testimony of the Scriptures. To the decisions of the sacred volume we all, as Old School Baptists, profess to bow with reverence and submission, so far as they are made plain to our understanding by the Spirit of him who alone is worthy to take the Book and open the seals thereof. It is true, as brother Wigginton justly remarks, that our brethren do not understand every portion of the Scriptures alike; though equally candid, and honestly inquiring after the truth they may differ to some extent as to the precise meaning of some of the passages; but with the root of the matter in their hearts, they will not be likely to differ so essentially as to break the bonds of christian fellowship in which the family of God is bound. As brethren we should be forbearing, one with another. We are all of us, while in the flesh, compassed with infirmities, and it does not become us to make a brother an offender for a word. While we contend earnestly (not angrily) for the faith, we are admonished "In meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves." Our reply to the several questions proposed by brother Wigginton must necessarily be brief.

1. Is the rule, (Matt. xviii. 15,) applicable to private or public offences? We know of no authority to make any distinction, provided the offence is of a personal character. "If thy brother trespass against thee." The instruction to go to him alone, would seem to favor the idea that the trespass was only known to the aggressor and aggrieved, but, to our mind, it is not restricted to such offences as are only known to the two, but the object of this order is to forbid an aggrieved brother giving currency to any falling of his brother, whether private or public, until he has in obedience to this rule,

labored to gain his brother. Any act or expression of a brother which affects the fellowship of his brother is, as we understand it, personal; it is between him and thee, though others may also know and be affected by it; still as it interrupts your fellowship with the offender, it is against thee; therefore delay not a moment, but in all meekness and kindness go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone.

2. By the words, "If he shall hear thee," &c., we understand that he receives you in the same kind and christian spirit in which you have come to him. He is willing to carefully investigate the matter, and give you all the satisfaction that the gospel requires. If he be innocent, or unconscious of having committed the trespass; yet, if he hear thee; he is ready to explain, and do all in his power to convince thee of his innocence in the matter, without being angry, but rather thankful that he has a brother and brethren sufficiently faithful and friendly to candidly tell him what they consider to be his fault. If he hear thee, he will regard the order of the gospel, and if convinced that he has trespassed, will turn to thee, saying, "I repent," and thou forgive him; if it is seven times in a day. If he hear thee, the gospel requires of him to acknowledge his fault, and to forsake the wrong, and make such reparation as the nature of the trespass demands. Upon his doing this, you are required to forgive him, and never, to your most confidential friend, much less to an enemy, let it be known that he has trespassed against thee at all.

3. "If he neglect to hear thee, then take with thee one or two more," &c. Who? and for what purpose? The direction of the apostle defines the character of those whom you shall take with thee, viz: "You that are spiritual, restore such an one." That is, those who will not be biased or swayed by any carnal motive, but are actuated by the Spirit of Christ. A venerable preacher among us once remarked, There is a

wide difference between the spirit being grieved, and our *old man* being made mad. Those who are spiritual are eminently qualified for this important labor, as first, they will consider their own liability to err, and therefore feel the humility which is calculated to gain an erring brother; and secondly, they will have the honor of God, the good of the cause in view, and indulge in no fleshly or unworthy motive. Such brethren are to be the witnesses, of what? *Of every word.* That in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. Of course they are not witnesses of what they do not know. They may be ignorant of the justness of the charge, or validity of the defence, but if they be spiritual, they are competent to judge of the spirit which the parties manifest. Whether the accusing party is influenced by an haughty, persecuting, censorious, unrelenting spirit, or what of christian humility; whether the new man is really grieved, or the old man angry. Every word has something to do in demonstrating where the fault lies, and when this matter finally comes before the church, if before the church it must come, these faithful brethren will establish, in testimony, to the satisfaction of the church, every word.

Does the direction, "Take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established," mean that the aggrieved brother shall be one of the witnesses? We presume it does. If he be found as the subject seems to imply, pursuing a gospel course in a gospel spirit, then he is a competent witness, but if not, the two witnesses shall be sufficient to establish every word. If he be included, there will be three concurring witnesses to establish every word; but if he be incompetent, still there are two, which is ceremonial law to establish every word. "He that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses."

But we will here call the attention of brother Wigginton, and of all our brethren, to the words which immediately follow: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven: for where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

When the aggrieved brother has failed to gain his brother in the first step, and in obedience to the command of Jesus has taken one or two more, *two or three* are gathered together in Christ's name; that is, by his authority, and Jesus is certainly in the midst. However perplexing, therefore, the case may be, these gathered brethren have the assurance that the Father will hear their united prayer for wisdom to direct them in the investigation, and as nothing can be hidden from the omniscient eye of him who is in the midst, there will be no failure to arrive at a righteous conclusion in regard to the just merits of the case. It is not said where two or three have met together, but where they are gathered, as Jesus gathers his sheep with his arm, by his Spirit, by his word, inclining them to convene in obedience to his command. Thus in the name and by the direct authority of Zion's eternal King they are gathered, and Jesus is in their midst, and there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed, therefore they are made competent witnesses to establish every word, and what they bind on earth being bound by his authority, is also bound in heaven. The foregoing reply to the third, if correct, will also cover the fourth inquiry, showing how a private trespass may be proved; and also what the witnesses, when they come before the church, are to establish. We will therefore pass on to the next item.

5. When the case comes before the church, does the aggrieved and the accused brother stand on the same ground

of fellowship with the church, if the aggrieved still charges, and the accused still denies? So far as the case to be presented to the church for investigation is concerned, they do. Our law judges no man until he has had a lawful hearing, and the object of telling it to the church, is that she may investigate and then decide upon the merits of it. She has no authority to withdraw her fellowship until she has investigated the matter according to the laws of Christ, and then if the accused neglect to hear the church, that is, to respect her authority as the body of Christ, she is to withdraw her fellowship.

Where a direct contradiction is persisted in by the accusing and accused, and the fact or facts involved in the contradiction are only known to the parties, the church may judge from the spirit manifested by them, they then both may be wrong, one or both may be honestly mistaken, or one may be perfectly correct, and the other entirely wrong, but still, he who is in the midst of the golden candlesticks, and as we have shown, when by his authority and in his name and Spirit they are agreed in asking for wisdom to direct, it shall be given them from above. "Some men's sins are open, going beforehand to judgment, others follow after," and as the eyes of the Lord are in his church, he will make the matter clear to the church, when she implicitly observes the direction he has given. It is possible that a whole church may be in disorder to some extent, and if that be the case, the decision should be delayed until a clearer light shall shine upon her.

6. The sixth and last question before us is what is meant by the excluded person being "unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican." If by a careful observance of the divine rule, in the spirit of the gospel, the offender cannot be reclaimed, if he neglect to hear the church, despises her authority, and persists in his wicked course, "Let him be unto thee as an

heathen man and as a publican." That is, let him be to thee, as the heathen and publicans were to Israel, under the ceremonial law. The Israelites were not allowed to unite with them in religious rites or allowed any part or lot in the peculiar privileges of their religion. They are not therefore to be allowed to retain a standing in the communion and fellowship of the church, nor treated as those who are of the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, but regarded as if they never had the fellowship of the church. Not that we are at liberty to indulge in a spirit of retaliation, or allow ourselves to injure them, in person or reputation, any farther than to withhold from them all expressions of fellowship, until God shall give them repentance, and incline their hearts to return with humble acknowledgments of their wrong to the church. And when the church has become satisfied that the offender has made suitable satisfaction, he is no longer to be regarded as a publican or heathen.

We cannot too highly estimate nor too sacredly observe the weighty responsibility which rests upon the church of God, and upon each member of the body, in the execution of the laws of the eternal King, in all its bearings upon them collectively or individually; but especially in attending to the discipline which he has enjoined. Too often, alas! when difficulties arise among brethren, or in the churches, a carnal feeling stealthily gains an undue ascendancy, and then, although we may seem to adhere strictly to the letter of the word, we may altogether miss the spirit, and thus transgress the law of Christ, and perhaps do great injustice to some one or more of Christ's little ones. If a brother be overtaken by temptation, and commit an offence, *you that are spiritual,* restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering your own liability to be also tempted. The laws of Christ are not obeyed if in our labors we act from an ambitions, haughty or resentful spirit, or if we forget that we

are also in the flesh, liable at every moment, if left to ourselves, to be overcome by the corruptions of our own depraved nature, and that the very service we are called upon to perform in laboring to reclaim a wanderer, may be, before the next setting sun, required to rescue us from the snares of Satan.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 452 – 458

CHURCHES IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

"THE church more generally known is the Navy Yard Church proposes to hold a protracted meeting on the 28th inst., with the expectation of obtaining the services of some 9f the ministering brethren from the South and West, on their way to the Philadelphia Convention. The church is now, and has for some time past, been without a pastor, and stands much in need of ministerial aid. Those of our brethren who can make it convenient to pay them a visit will be rendering the church and the cause of the Redeemer an acceptible service.

"There are but two regular Baptist churches in the city of Washington; in Georgetown there is no Baptist church. There is a third church in Washington - a small body - anti-missionary, and a member of the Black Rock portion of the Baltimore Association.

"The Navy Yard Church is ready to every good word and workable we believe and willing to support a pastor. They have been anxious for some time to secure the services of a faithful, active and zealous minister, and it would give us sincere pleasure to hear that this important field of labor has been well supplied. An efficient minister in this church might essentially aid our cause in the District, and in the adjoining State of Maryland, where we so greatly need help." - *Religious Herald.*

REMARKS.

WE were not aware of the existence of two Regular Baptist churches in the city of Washington, and were it not for the eulogism bestowed upon what is called the Second, or Navy Yard Church, we might still remain under the impression that

Mr. Sands had overrated the Baptist influence in that city, as we know of but one gospel church in Washington. But when Mr. Sands explains himself, we perceive his *regulars* are those who make void the law of Christ by their traditions, and who teach and practice for doctrines the commandments of men. Those are regular in his estimation who appoint protracted meetings, get up revivals in Methodist camp-meeting style, who maintain a deadly opposition to the *Black Rock portion of the Baltimore Association,* and who, when destitute of a pastor, will raise the requisite lucre, and instead of troubling the Lord of the harvest, will advertise for one; for should they call on the Lord for a pastor, peradventure he might send them one who would preach the truth, and very possibly might be unwilling to join their crusade against the Black Rock party; while all these evils may be avoided by making up a purse, and advertising for a man after their own heart.

With the above modifications of the term *regular,* we doubt not there may be found as many as two churches of the same description in that city. But what will the *doll-babies* of the Columbian College, who have been for a long time serving the Navy Yard regulars, think of Mr. Sand's compliment in representing that the Navy Yard Church is, and has for a long time been in so much need of ministerial aid, notwithstanding their constant supply from the machine? But that is for them, not us, to settle.

We doubt not the Shiloh Baptist Church at Washington will feel obliged to Mr. Sands for the honor he has unintentionally conferred on them in letting his readers know that we are not of his sort of *regulars,* and that the Shiloh Church is not ashamed to be called small, neither does she wish to be reckoned among the nations; it is her joy that her heavenly Father has given her the kingdom; and while our neighbors at the Navy Yard are preparing their dishes for a rich repast,

from those who may be going to the Convention, and while they may trim their ways to seek lovers, our expectation is from the Lord. We have long since been taught to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for well we know that vain is the help of man.

"Let others trust what names they please,
Their saints and idols boast,"
We've no dependencies like these,
We trust the Lord of Hosts.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
April 21, 1837.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 383 – 385

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Much Esteemed Brother Beebe: I once more drop you a few lines. We have passed through hard times, and troublesome times, and dangerous times, in this country, but through the mercies of an all wise Creator and Benefactor, we are yet alive, and among the living, and peace is now measurably restored, and we put our trust in him who said, "I am the Resurrection and the life." If you will not think me troublesome, I would like to ask a few questions as you are an old man, and have been acquainted with Baptists and Baptist usages for a long time. Did they receive members in the church when there was no fellowship in the church, or did they go to and try to restore fellowship? The United Baptists have laid aside the call for fellowship, but the regulars still call for fellowship here; and if broken, they try to restore it, and then travel on, when the cloud is taken up, or removed; but while the cloud of disunion or non-fellowship hangs lowering over us, we do not travel. If the Regular or Old School Baptists have done away with the rule of calling for fellowship, how long since? I learned from an old member of Double Spring Church it was done away there in that church in 1827 or 28, about the time the split took place, when nearly all went off with the Missionary movement. If it is not too much trouble, or to impertinent, please answer through the "Signs of the Times" and also which do you look on as the door in to the visible church, fellowship or baptism? I will not ask any more at present, lest it keep out more interesting matter.

Yours in Christian love,
Charles Hunsaker.
Oakpoint, Missouri.
April 15, 1866.

Reply to enquiries of brother Hunsaker: We are not sure that we fully comprehend the questions proposed by our brother, in all their bearings, but we feel bound to the extent of our ability, which is limited, to give such views as we have on any and all subjects relating to the faith, order, ordinances and discipline of the church of Christ, whenever called on to do so. In regard to fellowship, we hold,

First, that gospel fellowship cannot exist out of the church of God. Other religious bodies may call themselves churches as those blasphemers of whom John wrote in Revelation 2:9, and Revelation 3:8, calling themselves Jews, who were not, but did lie, for they are the synagogue of Satan, but their profession without gospel fellowship does not make them a gospel church. As no confederacy of persons can be a church of God but those who are born of God, and called in one hope of their calling, having one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all, so neither can the church of Christ be recognized as such where the unity of the Spirit is not kept in the bond of peace. In the organization of the gospel church at Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, all the constituent members gladly received, and steadfastly continued in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayers. They were of one heart and one mind. Laying all that they were, and all they possessed at the apostles' feet, calling nought that they possessed their own, they fully submitted themselves to be governed entirely, and in all things, by the rules laid down by the inspired and enthroned apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. All who can now be recognized as members of the church of God must hold themselves and all they possess subject to the instructions, orders and decisions of the same apostles, all of which will be found written in the New Testament.

Second, in the reception of members, the church should be in union, love and fellowship, without which they have no right to claim to be the church of the First Born, for how can any but the church receive members into the church? The various branches of anti-christ, who imitate the gospel mode of baptism, but who are not embraced in the fellowship of the gospel church, cannot receive members for her, nor administer ordinances which the church can consider valid; for how can they baptize or receive members into our fellowship, who are not themselves in our fellowship?

Third, in the reception of members, there are three particulars in which fellowship should be considered:

A. The general fellowship existing in the church, by which she must be identified as such. The fellowship being with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, and this characteristic fellowship can only be manifested by a steadfast continuance in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. There may be disorderly and unruly members connected, if their disorder and disregard for gospel rule be not approved by the church, without disqualifying her for the discharge of her duties; her travel is indispensable in the execution of the order of the house of God. She is not at liberty to stop her travel, because there are refractory members, under process of discipline, and she is not therefore disqualified from receiving members to her communion.

B. The unanimity of the church in regard to the reception of members has always, so far as we are advised, been considered indispensable in our Old School Baptist churches. Still should the church generally feel satisfied, and one or more should object, the church should carefully investigate the objection and decide whether it be right or wrong, and the objector in such case should submit to the judgment of the church in that case.

C. The applicant for membership should give satisfactory evidence that he or she is in fellowship with the church, born again of the same Spirit, and led to rejoice in the same Christ, trust in the same finished salvation, feed upon the same spiritual food, and believing the same doctrine, an evidence of which is desiring to take the yoke of Christ, and willing and ready to give up all things else which are incompatible with the Christian walk, and be subject to all the laws, ordinances, rules and regulations of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. All who can bring these evidences will be most cordially received, however weak, trembling, or unworthy they may feel themselves to be.

We know of no Old School Baptist churches that have suspended or laid aside any rule which is laid down by the apostles; for should they do so, they would cease to be Old School Baptists. All the school recognized by them in religious matters is the school of Christ and his apostles. We know of no Old School churches who receive members without the unanimous agreement of all the members present.

If by the door into the visible church our brother means the public and formal recognition of persons uniting as visible members of the church, we regard baptism as the ordinance by which they are so made visible. We may, and do, gain a fellowship with those who give evidence that they are born of God and led by his Spirit, but we can have no unbaptized members in a visible Baptist church. As Jordan separated between the wilderness and Canaan, so Jordan, or gospel baptism, divides between the world and the anti-typical land of milk and honey to the spiritual Israelites now. Baptism without fellowship, however *visible,* can only fill up the church with nominal members, but fellowship for the persons who desire membership, as to their being subjects of grace and proper subjects for baptism, without baptism cannot

make them visible members, nor gratify them for a seat at the Lord’s table, nor for any other of the peculiar privileges of church members.

As to the order of usages of the so-called Missionary, Free Will, or United Baptists, we know but very little, and we care still less. The church of Christ is a unit, with the faith and practice, given by Christ, and expounded by his apostles.

We may have missed in our remarks the points on which our views were desired, but we have replied according to our understanding of them, and what we have written we submit to the consideration of brother Hunsaker, and our readers generally, with strong desire that they may be useful to some extent at least to some enquiring minds.

Middletown, N.Y.
June 1, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 343 - 346

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

ABOUT eighteen hundred years ago, a Baptist Church was constituted at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to an ancient prediction was born of a virgin, and came into the world to preside as Head over all things to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Having manifest himself as the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and the only foundation upon which his church could rest securely, he claimed the exclusive privilege of building and of governing his church in his own way; his language is, "Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

After the similitude of "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but bearing down all opposition, it shall stand forever. The eternal Father set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and to his Son he said, "Thy throne, O God, is forever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom:" and in an audible voice from the third heaven made proclamation, "This (?) At an early period in the reign of the glorious Messiah, his authority was questioned by the high priests, scribes and Pharisees: "Tess us (said they,) by what authority doest thou these things, and who gave this authority?"

The subjects of King Jesus were chosen in a furnace of affliction, and advised that in the world they should have tribulation, but in Christ they should have peace.

Tracing the history of the church from the morning of her visible existence, we find her constantly beset with enemies; presenting to our view the anti-type of the burning bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. She has been constantly

enveloped with the flames of persecution; yet, to the astonishment of all her cruel foes, she is not consumed. We behold her King taken, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, after bearing the reproaches of ungodly men for about thirty years, during which time he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. – He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and to finish the horrid picture, was nailed to the fatal cross, and between two thieves, on Calvary, crucified and slain, – not by the open and avowed enemies of God and man, but by the most learned and popular denomination of professors of religion on the earth, – not by an "inert or anti-effort class," but by those who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; by men whose religion was a science, whose ministry was learned, and whose titles were honorary. We cannot do justice to our subject and stop here. No, the cry of slaughtered thousands who were put to death for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, ring in our ears, – who from under the altar cry with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." These things have been done in the green tree, and they will be repeated in the dry. They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and they will much more call them so, who are of his household.

We know there are many in our day crying Peace! Peace! And so there were in those times of bitter persecution above mentioned. The present is a time when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. Popular creeds are substituted in the place of the faith once delivered to the saints – the commandments of men stead of the gospel of Jesus Christ – human inventions take the place of divine ordinances – the work of the Holy Ghost, in gathering in and quickening the elect of God, is superceded by human contrivances. The holy scriptures are made an article of

religious speculation; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are dispensed with, for a mere excitement of the natural passions, and the peculiar virtues of an anxious seat. Four days, or protracted meetings, got up by men, are received as seasons of Pentecost, while the amount of money given in aid of the inventions of men, is made the standard of orthodoxy and the stepping stone to power. Instead of a strict adherence to the command of Zion's King, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," a profession of religion is urged as an indispensable qualifications for civil magistracy. In short, by a general amalgamation of the world and the church, by the onward march of priestcraft, the cloud of persecution is gathering fast, and the impending storm is almost ready to burst with dreadful fury upon this unhappy land, and to stain the American soil with the blood of all such as will not worship the beast or receive his mark. Candid reader, we appeal to you, are things so, or are we deluded? Would to God we were; but alas! awful realities stare us in the face. Ye can discern the face of the sky, and can ye not discern the signs of the times?

We do not flatter ourself that this little sheet will be able to shut the flood-gates of delusion; for the man of sin must and shall be revealed, whom the Lord will consume by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. But we feel it to be our duty to "blow the trumpet in Zion," and to sound an alarm on God's holy mountain, and exhort our brethren, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

In conducting this paper we expect to call down upon ourselves the indignation and wrath of those whom we oppose. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do not load us with reproaches and hard names; but it will be to us a

privilege rather than a trial to follow our beloved Lord through evil as well as through good report. Our prayer to God is, that we may be governed by the same spirit which beautified and adorned the life and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, that when we shall be reviled we may not revile again.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
Nov. 23, 1832

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 10 – 12

THE CHURCH OF GOD: WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the Living God; and how various are the applications of the word *church* in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent, is called a *church;* and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated, and with much parade given to the Lord! A church made of wood, or of bricks and mortar, so consecrated is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations; as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Mormon church, and these with very many other religious bodies are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike entitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways, real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul says, "There is one body, and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick, or lumber which men call churches, stand vitally united to Christ as their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one

faith, and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one spirit; and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not.

If these great popular denominations, when weighed in the balance, are found wanting, and when tried by the scriptures are rejected; does it not become us, who profess to the Old School, or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine, in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy scriptures identify the church of God?

When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light; when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members he ascended up on high; went to his Father and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of Righteousness and Priest of the Most High God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers; and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him; and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this he sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization; and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way, the Truth and the Life; in whom is vested exclusively all legislative power. Second, the apostles of the Lamb are seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment,

not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles are evangelists, and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize, and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles; with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church.

All the members which the church has power to recognize must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy.

As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevocable, the same rule which was observed at the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church; and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable; but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it.

We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside.

Second, there is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, "When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; (his Mediatorial throne is the throne of his glory) then shall ye also set upon twelve thrones judging

the twelve tribes of Israel." We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh; for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine, order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King; for Christ has further said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church.

Now then, let the laws of Christ embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and, it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ; for she is the ground and pillar of the truth. She is the perfection of beauty. She is the workmanship of God, and all his work is perfect. It therefore follows invariably that all who profess to be the church of Christ and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances, or his government, are base impostors.

In view of these well defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction, and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word

applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them; insomuch that the word which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold, in pictures of silver; as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now, they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state; for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine; but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but gladly received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized, and added to the church. That is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles, and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued *steadfast* in the apostles' doctrine implies that they encountered opposition; which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution. But so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution, nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing, or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine, and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both. But if we depart from the one, we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine, we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of anti-christ; but we

cannot depart from their instruction, and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone. And being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in breaking of bread; and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the First Born, from those humanly constructed religious organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the "Seven women, who shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach (Isaiah 4:1)." They dislike to be called anti-christian, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating; but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please; conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please; get religion when they please, or whatever kind of quality they please; keep it as long as they please, and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such *churches,* as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-

righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale; it is behind the age of progression in which we live; it is too slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved; while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved; or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 305 - 309

CHURCH ORDER.

Many difficult and perplexing questions may be suggested on almost every discriminating point of doctrine and practice by which the church of Christ should be distinguished from every other organization claiming to be religious, but we should impugn the wisdom of our divine law-giver, were we to conclude there was any deficiency in the rule given us in the New Testament for testing the correctness of the faith and practice of the saints.

Perhaps, when difficulties arise, we are too prone to inquire, what is best under the circumstances of the case; whereas the only proper inquiry should be, What is right? What does the word teach? What does the *rule* require? By the divine rule we are to know what God approves, that do, and leave the result with God. And if any man lacketh wisdom to understand the rule in its application to trying cases, let him ask of God who giveth to every man liberally and upbraideth not. We do not regard it as any departure from the law of Christ to counsel one with another on the subject, for our Lord has constituted his members *helpers* one of another, but in all our deliberations and investigations we should bear in mind the supremacy of Christ as our Head, and of his laws as our rule.

As we read the divine law in regard to christian baptism, it is both definite and clear. The candidate should be a believer, making profession of his faith in the Lord Jesus, and confessing his sins. We care not how old or how young, provided he .can so bring forth fruit meet for repentance as to satisfy us that he has a right to the ordinance. The administrator must be, at the time of administering baptism, recognized by a gospel church as a regular ordained minister of the gospel, sustained by the fellowship of the church as

her servant. Then the ordinance must be administered according to the precept and example given by our Lord Jesus Christ. A departure from any of these regulations, in our estimation, renders the administration null and void. Neither the sincerity nor honesty of administrator or candidate can supply the deficiency if these rules are any of them neglected.

Now, while we presume brother Strickland agrees with us in the foregoing remarks, a difficulty is presented in determining the indispensable qualifications of the administrator. But, as neither the prerogative nor ability to search the hearts or to try the reins of the children of men belong to us, instead of our being required to decide whether the administrator or the candidate is a subject of grace or a hypocrite, we are only to look to the precepts of Christ, from these learn whether he has authorized us to extend or to withhold an expression of fellowship. If therefore a candidate asks baptism, confessing his sins, giving scriptural evidence that he repents of them, and professing faith in Jesus, however weak he may be in the faith, or whatever may have been his previous course of life, we do not feel at liberty to reject him, and if he imposes upon the church or the administrator by making a false profession, the guilt is on his own head. The church and the administrator are clear, provided that they have been faithful in the investigation of the matter.

As the administrator must be indorsed or sustained by the fellowship of the church of God, in order to make his administration of the ordinance valid, it becomes a question with us, how far a church of Christ may be involved in disorder and still be a church of Christ. Let us have the assurance that the administrator stands in the fellowship of the church of Christ at the time of the administration, and that gives the ordinance validity which we dare not annul.

The Corinthian church, and the churches of Galatia, had become to some extent disorderly, but did not lose their standing as apostolic churches. The validity of the baptism of such as were added to them while in a disorderly or *bewitched* state, was not questioned as we are informed. Associations and churches may extend or withhold their immediate correspondence one with another, without effecting their standing as regular churches of Christ. But if fellowship is broken, and the expression of it withdrawn, it is manifestly inconsistent, to still regard their administrations valid gospel administrations, if the churches cannot be regarded as gospel churches. The cases mentioned by brother Strickland, are probably very trying cases, but the question on which our decision must rest in this matter is, Are they churches of Christ or not? If they are, we have no right to reject them because they have in some measure become disorderly, but labor in meekness and faithfulness to reclaim them. But if they have been labored with and have persisted in disorder until the divine rule has compelled the orderly churches to withdraw fellowship from them, then let them be unto thee as heathen men and as publicans were to the Jews, and let their baptism be unto thee as though it had been administered by publicans or heathens.

It is very important and desirable that our churches should decide and act harmoniously on this subject, or their peace and harmonious correspondence will become involved. The churches which profess to be of the Primitive or Old School order, with but very few exceptions, have taken the same view of the subject which we have expressed, and have acted accordingly. But such churches as have disrespected the general usage of the Old School, have received persons on what is generally regarded as invalid baptism, have opened a door for divisions.

Should persons, wishing to become members of one of our churches, find that we cannot indorse their baptism, that, in a gospel sense, we consider them unbaptized, they may make a bridge of a neighboring church which will receive them without baptism, and then come to us with a letter from a church with which we have been, and still are in all other respects in fellowship, and in such case compel us to reject what they have indorsed. How can two or more walk together, except they are agreed? While we all desire the peace of Jerusalem, and the order of the house of God, let us be exceedingly cautious how we act, in all matters involving the union, harmony and fellowship of those who belong to the household of faith.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 326 - 328

THE CHURCH

About eighteen hundred years ago, a Baptist Church was constituted at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to an ancient prediction was born of a virgin, and came into the world to preside as Head over all things to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Having manifested himself as the Only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and the only foundation upon which his church could rest securely, he claimed the exclusive privilege of building and of governing his church in his own way; his language is, "Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

After the similitude of "a stone cut out of the mountain without hands," the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but bearing down all opposition, it shall stand forever. The eternal Father set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and to his Son he said, "Thy throne, O God, is forever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom:" and in an audible voice from the third heaven made proclamation, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." At an early period in the reign of the glorious Messiah, his authority was questioned by the high priests, scribes and pharisees: "Tell us (said they) by what authority doest thou these things, and who gave this authority?"

The subjects of King Jesus were chosen in a furnace of affliction, and advised that in the world they should have tribulation, but in Christ they should have peace.

Tracing the history of the church from the morning of her visible existence, we find her constantly beset with enemies; presenting to our view the anti-type of the burning bush

which Moses saw in the wilderness. She has been constantly enveloped with the flames of persecution; yet, to the astonishment of all her cruel foes, she is not consumed. We behold her King taken, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, after bearing the reproaches of ungodly men for about thirty years, during which time he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. - He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and to finish the horrid picture, was nailed to the fatal cross, and between two thieves, on Calvary, crucified and slam, - not by the open and avowed enemies of God and man, but by the most learned and popular denomination of professors of religion on the earth, - not by an "inert or anti-effort class," but by those who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; by men whose religion was a science, whose ministry was learned, and whose titles were honorary. We cannot do justice to our subject and stop here. No, the cry of slaughtered thousands who were put to death for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, ring in our ears, - who from under the altar cry with a loud voice, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth." These things have been done in the green tree, and they will be repeated in the dry. They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and they will much more call them so, who are of his household.

We know there are many in our day crying Peace! Peace! and so there were in those times of bitter persecution above mentioned. The present is a time when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. Popular creeds are substituted in the place of the faith once delivered to the saints - the commandments of men instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ - human inventions taken the place of divine ordinances - the work of the Holy Ghost, in gathering in and quickening the elect of God, is superseded by human

contrivances. The holy scriptures are made an article of religious speculation; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are dispensed with, for a mere excitement of the natural passions, and the peculiar virtues of an anxious seat. Four days, or protracted meetings, got up by men, are received as seasons of Pentecost, while the amount of money given in aid of the inventions of men, is made the standard of orthodoxy and the stepping stone to power. Instead of a strict adherence to the command of Zion's King, "Render unto Caesar things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's," a profession of religion is urged as an indispensable qualification of civil magistracy. In short, by a general amalgamation of the world and the church, by the onward march of priestcraft, the cloud of persecution is gathering fast, and the impending storm is almost ready to burst with dreadful fury upon this unhappy land, and to stain the American soil with the blood of all such as will not worship the beast or receive his mark. Candid reader, we appeal to you, are things so, or are we deluded? Would to God we were; but alas! awful realities stare us in the face. Ye can discern the face of the sky, and can ye not discern the signs of the times?

We do not flatter ourself that this little sheet will be able to shut the flood-gates of delusion; for the man of sin must and shall be revealed, whom the Lord will consume by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. But we feel it to be our duty to "blow the trumpet in Zion," and to sound an alarm on God's holy mountain, and exhort our brethren, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

In conducting this paper we expect to call down upon ourselves the indignation and wrath of those whom we oppose. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do not load us with reproaches and hard names; but it will be to us a

privilege rather than a trial to follow our beloved Lord through evil as well as through good report. Our prayer to God is, that we may be governed by the same spirit which beautified and adorned the life and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, that when we shall be reviled we may not revile again.

New Vernon. N.Y.
November 23, 1832

Elder Gilbert Beebe

CIRCULAR LETTER OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION.

This extraordinary document has been forwarded to us by brother D. Hulsizer, with a request for us to copy and explain. The great length and little value of the letter is our reason for refusing it room in our columns; but as our brother seems particularly desirous for our view upon that part of the letter in which the office of pastor is defined, we copy an extract upon that point, and subjoin our opinion on the same.

"A minister may be called as a supply or regular minister, to one, two or three churches at a time, but cannot be pastor only to one. He may act as a supply without being a member of the church he supplies; but he cannot be a pastor where he is no member. He may be called, for a limited time, (say a year or more) as a supply; but a pastor cannot be settled for a limited time, because a limitation would destroy the nature of the pastoral relation.

"The term pastor or *pastoris* means first, a shepherd, which is a relative term; he must have a flock. Second, it has the meaning governor, king or husband. A shepherd cannot attend to two or more flocks. A husband cannot have to wives at once. He cannot sustain the pastor's office without a lawful relation to the church. He cannot sustain the relation of a husband for a limited time. The very vague relation in which pastors (so called) have been understood to stand to the churches, has been fraught with disastrous evils not easily remedied.

"When a church settles a minister as a pastor or bishop, she enters into an affinity similar to that of wedlock, and if the

does not love him more than all other men in that relation, (all things considered) she is not worthy of him. When he unites with him, she puts into his hands the great charter of her existence – the gospel of Christ, her covenant, her discipline, and the supremacy of her executive power. She now in the utmost confidence says, by placing him at the head of her affairs, This is your house, this is your garden, this is your family. Do your duty faithfully, and we will sustain you in the execution of the great duties of your office. And as *love* is the fulfilling of all just law, no man can discharge the onerous duties of the pastoral office unless he sincerely loves the church over which he settles. He is the regular moderator of all their meetings, whether for worship or business. It is his duty to direct the worship in that way he may judge the most conducive to the general good; always preferring the greater general good to the indulging of personal enjoyments.

"He is to watch for souls, and to seek for their conversion and salvation. He is to use all means consistent with christian prudence and morality, to increase the congregation and to retain it; well knowing if he loses his auditory he fails of success. He must regulate his services with great judgment, for what may satisfy or even please a christian, may not always be the best suited to the general good; but he is never to be a man-pleaser, to gratify the fastidious. The services should be multiplied or diminished at discretion. His visiting should be general and short; so that wherever he has been, it cannot but be known that the faithful pastor has been there. Especially he should cultivate the affections of the youth of the congregation, and always make them feel that the best return they can make for his attentions is to seek for the salvation of their own souls.

"In the business, he should decide what is in order, and what is not. He should seldom give his opinion on business first,

but reserve his for the last, if necessary, and then never without great judgment. For a vascillating disposition in a pastor is destructive of his influence.

“He should always set himself up as an example to the believers, showing uncorruptness. He should be willing to challenge (as his Master did) the whole world, and say, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” And if at any time he should be found in error, let him confess it at once, repent and reform on the spot, and *live* every slanderous tongue into silence. Every pastor should be a missionary MAN; and should consider the community over which he presides responsible for bearing their just proportion in giving the gospel to all nations.

“He has no more right to meditate a change of his relation for the sake of popularity or emolument, than the church has from similar motives; which in either case is inconsistent with the sacred ties that bind them.

“Whatever may be said in favor of employing ministers of the gospel in various agencies for public institutions, either of science or religion, it certainly secularizes their devotional character, and derogates from their religious elevation, and is incompatible with pastoral relations. It may be inquired, “What is a pastor to do, if he cannot sustain himself or family?” He should candidly tell the church, through her deacons, who should immediately adopt measures to remedy the evil; but if no method can be found to answer the purpose, he is entitled to look to other sources.

“The duties of churches to their pastors should be clearly understood, and invariably, promptly and faithfully discharged. The pious and noble minded pastor suffers more from the want of proper treatment in the church, from

leading members in particular, than from all the trouble he may meet in the world.

"And in the first place let your agreement with him be put in writing; let it be recorded on your book, and let your proper officers give him a certificate of the same. And if your church and congregation is chartered according to law, (which it ought to be) let your trustees give him their obligations for the stipulation, so that all may be at rest, and no dispute arise. Let the deacons see to it, that the trustees be prepared to meet their engagement promptly; for want of this, many churches have occasioned their pastors great trouble and loss, as well as their own dishonor. Endeavor to make him as happy as possible, and you will always thereby receive a rich return. He as constantly needs to be met with your smiles, as does the careworn and affectionate husband require the soothings of his bosom companion. Never suffer any of your members to treat him with want of respect or veneration. A church should never leave her pastor under the necessity of complaining of any one. That mother must be a very unlovely companion who would suffer her children to speak or act unworthily towards the man of her choice. The church should be always zealous to sustain her pastor's character at home and abroad; for in the first place, his use fulness depends upon it; if his character sinks, God will not bless you in his labors. Secondly, your own character and influence sink with his. Never suffer yourselves, in speaking of your pastor, to say, "Well, I know he is but a man;" for first, it is untrue; he is a man, and he is more than a man: he is a christian minister and pastor; he is the plenipotentiary of Jesus Christ to this world, and his personal secretary for you. Secondly, the moment a member conceives the idea that your pastor is no more than any other in the church, that person places him or herself beyond the blessing of pastoral relation. You should never let your pastor languish for want of encouragement; while on the other hand it is disgusting to flatter; on the

other hand it is unkind not to let him know that his labors are appreciated. You should yield a cheerful submission to his authority as moderator in all your business; never reply to his admonition; when he rebukes, be humble and patient. "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." – Heb. xiii. 17.

"And if at any time it should appear, generally, that he has departed from the faith, or has become erroneous in practice, let the deacons Communicate with him in a respectful manner on the subject; and if after you have done your duty, things remain unsettled, you may solicit the friendly office of some other pastor with whom he is on good understanding, and if there is no Prospect of adjustment to satisfaction, and if other churches are willing to receive him you should regularly dismiss him, but never say a word against him, after his connection with any other church. You may never receive a report against him unless it be well authenticated by two or three witnesses of competent ability. And if in the ministry of Providence, you should ever be called to try him for immorality or heresy, always ask the friendly counsel of neighboring ministers."

The apostle John was an elder or pastor; but to which particular branch of the church he belonged we are not in formed; nor have we a right to suppose that he was a member of any particular branch of the church of God. The care of all the churches devolved on the apostles; and those who are called of God to fill the pastoral office, are charged to "Feed the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood." For the nice distinction made in the Circular letter between a Supply and a pastor, the writer brings no authority from the scriptures.

The definition of the term *pastor* is precisely what might be expected from Charles Bartolette, the writer of the Circular, who, claiming to hold that office himself would by no means object to be called *Rabbi*, or addressed as "His Royal Highness," Bishop Bartolette, "*king*" of the Amwellites of Flemington, New Jersey. He certainly could not intend by defining the word pastor to mean king to show that he is to lord it over God's heritage; or governor, that he is to be the servant of all; or by defining the term to mean husband, that he is to be responsible for the maintenance of the church, for he is of a very different opinion on the subject, and would have the wife or church bound by a written article to maintain her husband, governor, king, &c. The latin pastor, or *pastoris*, signifies a shepherd, a herdsman, a keeper of poultry, &c. This is the prime and legitimate meaning of the term, and agrees with the Greek term *poimenas*, as in Eph. iv. 11. "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." It is some times used metaphorically, applied to a governor or king, as Christ who is the King of Zion, is the Shepherd and Bishop of his flock; but in this sense it is never used in the scriptures in reference to the office of an ordinary pastor, and it is presumed that, after excepting the papists, Mr. Bartolette and the Central New Jersey Association, are the first who have attempted to confer regal dignity and absolute power over the church of God upon the pastoral office. When an inkling after authority and superiority was manifested among some of Christ's disciples, at a certain time, Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye. know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them; but it shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, (or servant.) "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." – Matt. xx. 25-27. "And whosoever of you will be chiefest, let him be servant of all; for even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but

to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." – Matt. x. 44, 45.

In all respects the scriptural definition of a pastor, his qualifications and his work, is essentially different from, and in many, directly opposite to the spirit and letter of the Circular before us. The apostle Peter, who was also an elder, exhorted the elders or pastors among those to whom he directed his epistle; and in his exhortation clearly stated the proper work of the pastoral office, thus: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof; not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" – 1 Peter v. 1-3. Elder, pastor and shepherd are relative terms, it is true, and imply the existence of a flock; but they do not imply king and subjects, husband and wife, &c. The flock of God is to be fed and will be fed by pastors which God has given for that purpose. This however is not the world or worldly congregation, but the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood. "I lay down my life for the sheep," says Jesus. The sheep are then the flock which he purchased with his blood, and the sheep exclusively. His sheep are still more definitely described both negatively and affirmatively: "Ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you;" "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." This flock is comparatively little: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is composed of none who have not heard the Shepherd's voice: unregenerate sinners are not included; nor can they in their unregenerate state be fed with the sincere milk of the word. They hear not the voice of strangers: therefore they cannot be found in the congregation of Charles Bartolette, or of those of his strange brotherhood.

The pastor is instructed to take the oversight of the flock of God; by which we are not to understand that he is endowed with kingly authority; for that would make him a lord over God's heritage; but what is implied by the oversight which a shepherd has over a flock of sheep, to see that they are well fed; all in a healthy condition; and to watch against false prophets coming among them in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. If by oversight in the case we were to understand regal authority, this direction would seriously clash with the words before quoted from the mouth of our Lord; expressly forbidding his ministers to exercise lordship over their brethren; and also those in which lie forbids his people to call any man on earth lord, or master: for one is their Master and their Lord, even their Father in heaven. Timothy, it is true, was to teach with all authority but all authority that is connected with the pastoral office, is the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Hence we learn the pastor is restricted to the authority of Christ, and may not with impunity quote the authority of popes, mission boards, or senior divines, &c., as the custom of the New School is. This oversight of the flock of God is not to be assumed from constraint nor from sinister motives. King Bartolette would have the pastor under hire, and constrained by written contract, by some legally chartered body, but this, with every sentiment we have ever known that coxcomb to utter, is at antipodes with the scriptures of truth.

Another equally absurd notion contained in the Circular is that a minister of Jesus has no right to officiate in the pastoral office except in that branch of the church to which he stands immediately connected. The elders, or pastors, among the saints scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, were not at home, and confined to some specific localities, but being driven out in

the providence of God, by persecutions, they were elders or pastors still, and were still exhorted to feed the flock of God. It matters not where they may be located, they are to be fed, admonished, instructed and taught, not by constraint of written contracts, or stipulated amount of filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

The old papal, and to some extent, protestant notion of marrying preachers to churches and congregations for life, to take them for better or worse, hit or miss, is revived in this Circular; and it is in keeping with the idea of kingly power and majesty as belonging to the office of pastor. The minister of a church is by no means to be regarded as standing in such relation to her. If the pastor be the husband of the church, he is the father of all her legitimate children and is bound to support, sustain and defend them. But is it so? The pastor looks to the church for support, as the candle is sustained by the candlestick, and not the candlestick by the candle. Christ is the Husband and the only Husband the church has, or can have, without committing adultery. It is not, as asserted in the Circular, necessary that the church should love the person who serves her as pastor, more than any other minister of the gospel or private christian. Christians should esteem the ministers of Jesus highly for their work's sake; but all alike who are equally engaged in the same blessed employment.

It is also false that the church puts into the hands of her pastor the gospel. If there come any unto her who bring not the doctrine which Christ authorized, and the apostles preached, she is commanded not to receive him or them, as the case may be, into her house, nor bid them God-speed. The pastors which God gives to his church are by him made partakers of that gospel which they are to preach to the flock of God. But this is not all that is contended for in this Circular. The church covenant, the discipline and supreme

executive power of the church, are all to be surrendered into the hands of the kingly prelate. The execution of her covenant and of her discipline, all to devolve on the man she may choose as her pastor. According to this theory the church has no executive power to discipline her members; her prelate is to cast his censures as he may please, cast out of fellowship or receive into covenant union without consulting the judgment of the church. Such order may do for Central New Jersey Association, but it will never answer for a church of Jesus Christ. In further describing what they hold to be the duties of the pastoral office, they say, "It is his duty to direct the worship in that way he may judge the most conducive to the general good. He is to watch for souls, and to seek for their conversion amid salvation, and use all means, &c., to increase and retain the congregation." Not one syllable of all these duties is anywhere to be found in the sacred volume. They that worship God are to worship him in spirit and in truth; and not as some bloated specimen of mortality may dictate. God has directed in what manner he will be worshiped, and if any man lack wisdom in this matter, he is directed to ask counsel of God, (not of the usurper of God's special prerogatives) who giveth liberally unto all men, and upbraideth not. In what part of the divine record has God directed that his pastors shall watch for the salvation of souls? Salvation is of the Lord, and not of the pastor. Pastors may watch, and preach, and pray, and exhort, and do all in their power, but can never communicate one spark of spiritual life to a single soul. None who are truly taught of God will ever presume to think of any such thing; but rather will they testify with Peter, that there is no other name given under heaven nor among men. whereby sinners can be saved, because there is salvation in no other name. Had Christ and his. apostles and other primitive preachers of his gospel taken measures for increasing and retaining their congregations, they would not so frequently have offended them by telling them the truth. What have the ministers of

Jesus to do with increasing and retaining their congregation? He that bath God's word is to declare it faithfully, and to preach, whether men will hear or forbear; having the assurance always, that the more faithfully and plainly they are enabled to preach the gospel, the greater will be the opposition they will be called to encounter from the world, the flesh and the devil. The Circular asserts that what may satisfy or please a christian, may not always be for the general good. There never was a christian that could be satisfied with anything from the pastor short of the gospel. With the gospel christians are not only satisfied, but pleased; but this is thought to be, at least sometimes, not suited to the general good. It certainly is not so well calculated to increase and retain large congregations. It is not so well suited to puff the pride and vanity of the preacher. It will not generally command so large a salary, or bring under the princely reign of the lordly clergymen so many subjects as will. the doctrines of the world. In regard to the duties of churches to their kings or pastors, we are told in the Circular that the church and world should be married, or, in their own words, chartered according to law. Their agreement with their hireling should be in writing. The trustees should give their obligation for the stipulation, so that all may be at rest and no dispute arise.

This is what the Circular avers "should be." But why should it be thus? Has the God of heaven forfeited the confidence of his ministers whom he has commanded to trust alone in him, that they should require the written obligation of a chartered body in order to put the matter of their support at rest? Which of the primitive churches were with their congregations incorporated by law? Did the church at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Corinth, Rome, Galatia, or Antioch, through legal trustees, bind themselves to pay the Reverend Messrs. Peter, Jude, John, Paul, or even Barnabas, a

stipulated sum of money for their pastoral services? ‘What nonsense!

Another duty imposed on the churches is that they are to consider their pastor something more than a man!

“Never suffer yourselves in speaking of your pastor, to say, ‘Well, I know he is but a man;’ for first, it is untrue; he is a man, and he is more than a man; he is a christian minister and pastor. He is the plenipotentiary of Jesus Christ to this world; and his personal secretary for you.”

Plenipotentiaries are never sent by any government to negotiate business within the territory of such government; but in all cases to other or foreign governments. But the ministers of Jesus Christ are sent to feed the flock of God, and charged to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness: how can they then be considered as plenipotentiaries? The appropriate business of plenipotentiaries is to represent the government to which they belong, and they are invested with full power to act for that government, and the government by which they are sent is bound to ratify all their negotiations. Will any one beside the New Jersey Central Association pretend that any such authority is vested in poor finite worms of the dust? How blasphemous the reflection upon the Head of the church, to represent that he has vested such unlimited and discretionary power in his preachers. One of the pastors within the bounds of that very association recently left his family and ran away with another female. Was he a plenipotentiary vested with full power to represent the whole government of the church of God? How preposterous!

The spirit that would exalt itself above all that is called God, betrays itself throughout the Circular. There is not the shadow of authority in the scriptures of truth to support such

a pretension. The apostles of the Lamb, who were seated on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of spiritual Israel, unto whom the keys of the kingdom were given, that their decision should be binding, claimed only to be ambassadors, but never claimed to be vested with unlimited power or with any power whatever beyond the precincts of the kingdom of Christ; and all the power they possessed even there was in subordination to Christ as the King. But the New School gentry of Central New Jersey Association claim for their arminian organs, that they are the plenipotentiaries of Jesus Christ to the world. A more popish assumption has never been made by any short of the pope of Rome. In addition to this arrogant pretension, these work-mongers claim to be the personal secretaries of Jesus Christ to the church. What they intend to claim as being embraced in this office, we cannot tell; unless they claim to keep his accounts with the church: we leave them to define their own meaning, knowing that they cannot exceed the arrogance and blasphemy of their claim in the preceding item of the Circular.

The Circular closes by asserting that the salvation or damnation of sinners often turns on the conduct of professors. “And who,” say they, “can tell what angels and assembled worlds will witness on that great day when the faithful christian shall greet, face to face, the souls he or she has been instrumental in saving?” No christian has ever anticipated any such thing. The very thought of dividing the honors arising from the salvation of souls with the Redeemer, would make all heaven shudder. None but arminians are capable of exulting in such impious thoughts; yet the sentiment is every way worthy of the pen of Charles Bartolette, and of the endorsement of Central New Jersey Association.

We beg the forbearance of our brethren and readers for having taken up so much of our paper in exposing this fulsome stuff.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
August 1, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 300 – 312

CLOSE OF THE VOLUME

With this number we close the volume of 1863, and the thirty-first year of our labors in the publication of the *Signs of the Times.* Whether we have justly delineated the *signs of the times* in our record of passing events, and in our labors generally to show the tendency of the religious developments of the thirty years which have just passed, our readers must judge. We have never assumed the infallible inspirations of the holy apostles or prophets, but we have not shunned to declare the counsel of God, so far as we have had light on the subjects which have been discussed through our columns.

When we spread our banner to the breeze there was great commotion in the religious world. The new theories of doctrine and legions of humanly invented religious institutions which were at that time deluging and overwhelming the Baptist denomination had become so oppressive to those who were unwilling to be governed by any other than the laws and institutions of our Lord Jesus Christ, or by any other rule of determining what were the laws and institutions of Christ, than the holy scriptures, they were compelled to withdraw fellowship and companionship from those who were wedded to their own inventions. The great fight of afflictions, persecution, and derision to which we were then subjected is well known to the few who were our contemporaries then, and who now survive. According to common computation, a generation has passed from these mortal shores since then, and of those who were with us then, but very few, comparatively, now remain on the earth. Those who do yet live and those who have access to the early volumes of this paper will bear us witness that we did so interpret what we regarded as the *signs of the times,* as

signifying, as we believed, the very things which are at this day so fully and so fearfully realized throughout our country.

That the numerous humanly invented religious institutions, falsely called Benevolent, blending the Church and World in their embrace, partaking of the elements of Christ and State, and claiming a national character, and withal, promising the evangelization of the world, and the speedy advent of their promised Millennium, we interpreted as indications of the ripening abominations of anti-christ, which would, as we understood the predictions of the scriptures, culminate in a millennium of blood. Such signs have been noted, and as the spirit of fanaticism has increased, and as the world has been more and more fascinated with the spreading delusions, our announcement of our convictions have been attributed to a fault-finding spirit, and a perverse disposition to oppose everything that is good. We do not claim for ourselves, or for our brethren who have written for our columns, any more sagacity, or ability to unveil the dark pages of the future than others possess, but we do claim that we have relied on what God has spoken by the mouth of all his prophets and apostles. And still the dark cloud lowers upon the world, like a gloomy pall, mantling in its deepest shades alike the clergy and the laity of the Man of Sin, the son of perdition, whose coming, as we are informed, is with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.

Signs are also given of the oppression, and persecution of the saints of God: Signs of Zion’s oppressions, and of her deliverance’s: Signs of delusions, of vital piety, and of revivals: Signs of the falling away from the faith and order of the gospel, and of being turned to fables: And finally, there are signs which we are admonished to heed of the final coming of our God and Savior, when he shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on his

enemies, and for the everlasting deliverance of all those who love his appearing.

Brethren, friends, patrons, of the *Signs of the Times,* in view of the present state of the Church of God, in view of the eventful period we are now passing through, in view of the manifest indications of the near approach of the resurrection of the Lord's Two Witnesses, and of the awful judgments, long restrained, but now about to overwhelm the adversaries, can you afford to dispense with the further publication of the *Signs of the Times?* To sustain it will require, as during the past year, your exertion to extend its circulation, and the liberality of those who are able to contribute to its support. Should we increase the rates of subscription, as most of the publications of the day have, we greatly fear that we should thereby place it beyond the ability of very many of the poor who desire to receive it. The liberal support, so seasonably given during the now closing year, assures us that we shall be sustained, and if the Lord will, we shall issue the first number of our next volume on or about the first of January, 1864, and continue its publication through the year.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 441 – 443

COLOSSIANS 1. 19.

"FOR it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." – Col. i. 19

How peculiarly pleasing it is to such as trust alone in the Lord to contemplate the fullness of the Lord Jesus Christ! However lean, barren and destitute God's children may feel themselves to be, it is a real satisfaction to know that he possesses all fullness in himself; and that "Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." Upon a subject of so much interest, so full of consolation to the family of God, a few reflections cannot be uninteresting.

The character in whom all fullness is treasured is none other than the immaculate Lamb of God, the Redeemer of Israel, the Mediator of the New Testament, the King of Sion and the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls. However much his character and perfections have been traduced by Pharisees, workmongers and modern arminians who have denied his power to execute his sovereign pleasure in calling, quickening and eventually glorifying all that his Father gave him, and how much soever they may reflect upon his wisdom, goodness and grace, "Unto you that believe, he is precious." But may we not inquire, in what does his fullness consist? It certainly does not consist in the possession of all or any of those qualities or attributes which men are wont to ascribe to him, such as *anxiety, inability, dependence* on creatures' wills or works; nor can he be filled with the spirit of that religion which is highly esteemed by the children of this world, since that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God. Men have regarded him as altogether like themselves, as possessing a fullness of such qualities as to them, in their depraved and benighted state, would seem comely and God-like. But the natural opposition

of man to all that belongs to the divine perfections disqualifies him for justly appreciating that which is truly good and spiritually excellent.

First. “In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” – Col. ii. 9. What do we or can we possibly know of the Godhead that we have not learned through the medium of our Lord Jesus Christ? What conceivable attribute of God that does not shine forth in the face of the Beloved? “He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.” – Heb. i. 3. Eternity, immutability, self-existence, independence, omniscience, omnipotence, justice, love and truth are all treasured up in him as they exist in the Father. He that knoweth the Son knoweth the Father. He that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father. And he that receiveth or worshipeth the Son, receiveth and worshipeth the Father. Who can comprehend the fullness of him in whom all the Godhead dwelleth bodily?

Second. It hath pleased the Father that in him all fullness should dwell in regard to the church; for the apostle says he is “Given to be Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.” – Eph. i. 22, 23. And immediately connected with the words above cited the apostle adds, “And ye are complete in him who is the Head of all principalities and power.” – Col. ii. 10. This then must be considered as one important item of the fullness of Christ. All are in him that will ever be in him, his church created in him, chosen in him, loved in him, secured in him and made acceptable in him, are the fullness of his choice, purpose and grace; they are the fullness of his mystical body, embracing all the members of a perfect body, and the joints and bands, gifts and perfections, and as such they have ever existed in him in perfect harmony with the inspired testimony: “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations, even from everlasting to everlasting thou

God." – Psa. xc. 1, 2. This fullness embraces all that the Father gave him, all whom he has redeemed with his own blood, and all that shall ultimately reign with him in glory; so that all the powers that be can never add to his fullness in regard to the number or perfection of his church as his church exists in him; for that which is full can contain no more, that which is complete admits of no enlargement, and that Sion which God has pronounced "The perfection of beauty," (Psa. 1. 2) cannot be improved. However imperfect, uncomely, loathsome and incomplete the church collectively or the saints individually may be in herself or themselves considered, Christ is of God, made unto his people Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. – Cor. i. 30.

Third. He is "Full of grace and truth." – John i. 14. We are lost in wonder and admiration when we trace the perfections of our adorable Prince and Savior. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor, or who hath first given to him and it shall be recompensed to him again? For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen. – Rom. xi. 33-36.

Full of grace. All that has been flowing from the fountain of grace to meet the wants of his dependent people in ages past has not diminished his fullness. lie remains the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Not even that astonishing requisition upon the fountain when Jesus laid down his life for his sheep, when he bore the purse, carried our sorrows, endured the withdrawing of his Father's presence, could chill the ardor of his love or lessen the abundance of his grace. Often as we, the children of his love, are involved in clouds and darkness, doubts anti fears, and in our extremity made to approach the throne of grace, we witness the ample

fullness of grace still flowing on to meet our returning wants. Like the fullness of his grace is that of his truth, it endureth for ever; heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word cannot fail. How consoling to his saints is the assurance that his promises are based on infallible truth. "Wherein God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." – Heb. vi. 17, 18. Of the indwelling fullness of the Redeemer we may include his power. All power in heaven and on earth is given into his hands. – Matt. xxviii. 18. That he should give eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him. – John xxvii. 2. There is in him an unwasting fullness of all that can contribute to his glory or the real good of his people. He is full of sympathy for the feelings of our infirmities, full of compassion, full of wisdom and knowledge, full of love and full of glory. Truly we may say with the apostle, Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate front sinners and made higher than the heavens. – Heb. vii. 26. "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." – John i. 16.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
Nov. 15, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 88 – 92

COLOSSIANS 2:6

“As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” Col. ii.6.

At the request of a sister in the state of Virginia, we offer a few remarks on the important admonition given by the apostle to the saints in the passage written above. That Christ Jesus is the Lord of life and glory, that he is the mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace, is a truth too deeply engraved upon the hearts of the children of God to require argument or demonstration beyond what the scriptures record, and the Holy Ghost makes plain in the experience of all who are born of God and led by his Spirit. Yet we are informed in the word that no man can call him Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. No human efforts to instruct the unregenerated sinner in modern schools or by Gamalial, can bring the sons of men to an experimental knowledge of the Redeemer, as both Lord and Christ; for, “No man knoweth the Son but the Father”; nor can any man come unto him except the Father draw him. None of the princes of this world knew him; for if they had known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of life and glory. To know him is eternal life. “This is life eternal,” said Jesus to the Father, “that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” And a knowledge of him is inseparably connected, with a knowledge of the Father. “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.” “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?” “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also.” He and his Father are one. To know him is also to know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings, and to be made conformable unto his death. This knowledge is by revelation: “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, to reveal his Son in me.” “Blessed are

thou Simon; for flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my father which is in heaven."

The reception of Christ Jesus the Lord implies that we were once in a state of destitution, living without Christ and without hope in the world. And although it is a blessed thought and full of consolation that he has been our dwelling place in all generations, even from everlasting to everlasting, and that he has carried his people and borne them all the days of old; still we in our Adamic nature were without him; and in an experimental sense we remained without him until Christ was formed in us the Hope of Glory.

The reception of him also involves the consideration of the source from whence and the manner in which we received him. The source may be contemplated both negatively and affirmatively. We did not receive him from Adam, or any principle found in the nature, blood, or will of man; for the scriptures affirm in John i. 12, 13, of all who receive him, that they were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Not from the will or works of men, nor yet because we could claim Abraham to be our father, or that we were descendents from pious ancestors; nor because we had complied with conditions, or accepted the overtures; nor have we received him at the anxious bench, at the hands of those who have presumptuously and blasphemously offered us Christ. From no such quarter did ever a poor sinner receive the blessed Savior. But we are divinely instructed that he is from heaven, that he dwelt in the bosom of the Father, that he proceeded and came from the Father; that he was with him when there were no fountains flowing with water, before the decree was given to the seas appointing to them their bounds; before the mountains were brought forth, or even the highest dust of the habitable earth was formed.

But how did we receive him? First, we say, as the unspeakable gift of God to his church. For God hath given him to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fulness of him who filleth all in all. As he was given, so was he received, as the supreme Head over all things to his church. - The Head of all principalities and power, to preside in all the fulness of his power and majesty, and glory, over all the interests, affairs and destiny of all the members of his mystical body. As our Prophet, Priest and King, our Shepherd, Bishop, and Husband, our God, Man, and Mediator, and as our Advocate with the Father, the Propitiation for our sins, our Redeemer, Deliverer, and Surety. As our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption, as our Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. As the Way, the Truth, and the Life, admitting of no other way of access unto the Father, but by him. God has given him for a covenant to the people, as such we have received him, and in him as our covenant, ordered in all things and sure, we find every provision of mercy and grace which we can possibly need for time or for eternity. All the promises of God are in him as our covenant, and in him they are Yea, and Amen, to the glory of God by us. Not one gracious promise could we ever find out of him. The purpose and grace by which God has saved us and called us with an holy calling was given us in him before the foundation of the world. Our justification is in him, and our glory is in him. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory. Our life is also in him. Your life is hid with Christ in God; and we have never had any spiritual or eternal life out of him. He only hath immortality dwelling in the light. He is given to be a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. On them he has arisen with healing in his wings. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. As such we received him, if ever we received him at all. We have received him in all the offices, titles, and relations which he sustains, and which are

ascribed to him in the scriptures; and as the Brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person.

Furthermore, in being brought in our experience to receive him in all his offices, titles, and relations, we acknowledged our obligation to worship, adore, serve, honor, obey, and reverence him in them all. As our God, we received him as the supreme object of our worship, as our Mediator, in all his mediatorial offices and works, as our exclusive dependence for reconciliation to God, for complete justification and ultimate glory. We acknowledged in our reception of him that we were not our own, that he had bought us with a price; (that is in our redemption) and that our highest aim and most devout desire was to glorify him in our body, and in our spirit which are his. In receiving him as our King we took on us the obligation of allegiance and bowed our neck to take his yoke and learn of him, and to walk in all his ordinances and commandments as dear children.

“As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him.” That is, being in him, as composing a part of his mystical body, in unison with all the other parts of the body, each member is to walk. The members being fitly framed together, united by joints and bands, and each set in the body as it has pleased God to arrange them, being rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. So are they to move on, in all the order, ordinances and doctrine of the gospel. Delivered from the law of carnal commandments, their root, or the spring of all spiritual life and vigor being in Christ; they are to conform to him, to his law and authority; suffering no man to spoil or rob them, through philosophy or vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily. Consequently they are to look for nothing beyond him, or that is not found in him. Our

walk, in order to be in him must be a gospel walk; it must be in the footsteps of his flock; and in order to be in him it must, as members of him, filling the place assigned us as members of him, and therefore as members one of another.

Again, we may understand that our walk as christians in him, according to the application of the figure of the "True Vine," and its branches. "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the Vine, no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the vine, and ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit for without me ye can do nothing." We received the kingdom as little children, or we have never received it at all. And as little helpless children confide in and depend upon the wisdom and providence of the parent, so should the branches in Christ, his members remember that they are in themselves perfectly helpless and throughout their pilgrimage rely upon and confide alone in his divine protection, listen to his instructions, obey his commands, and renounce all confidence in the flesh.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 64 - 68

“COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE!”

WE rejoice to witness the disposition so generally manifested by our brethren throughout the United States, to obey the summons of their divine Lord, as expressed in the words inserted at the head of this article. There appears to be a simultaneous movement at this moment among our churches from Maine to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the remote west, there is certainly an unusual movement in the churches and associations, and God is evidently separating the precious from the vile. The intolerant measures entered into by the New School are beginning to produce powerful reaction in their churches; they have already turned their screws so tightly upon their people as to cause them, like the Hebrews in distress, to cry out because of their bondage and their task-masters. Those members of new school churches, who will not subscribe to the new inventions, falsely called benevolent, are frequently excluded, for no other charge than that of refusing to wear a new school collar; they are readily admitted, on profession of their faith, into the churches and communion of the old school regulars. On the other hand, those who are put away from our regular churches for departing from the primitive faith and practice of the gospel of Christ, and in no small number of instances when persons have been excluded from our regular churches, for gross immorality, drunkenness, lying, and even perjury not excepted, they are, and have been admitted among the new school - as witness the organization of a new school church recently, at Neversink Bridge, Sullivan Co., N. Y., as well as many other cases, nearly if not quite similar.

We would not be understood to complain of this course, by any means, for while we lament that there exists among

those who have stolen our name (Baptists) so much corruption; since it is so, and since we are divinely assured that evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, we are perfectly satisfied that the new lights should exhibit enough of their corruptions to bait away from us as many of their kindred spirits as have formerly infested our regular churches; for sure we are, that when the Arminians are called home from our churches, and all the sons and daughters of Zion are delivered by grace from their Babylonish captivity, the ranks of our King's army will be full, strong, united, complete, and terrible as an army with banners. Our churches have nothing to fear from this general movement. None will go out from us, but those that are not of us, that they may be made manifest that they are not of us; and these, certainly, if we retain them as nominal members, can only swell our numbers and disorder our ranks, while they cannot add to our beauty, tranquility, or peace; for the word of God assures us they are *cursed* children, that *cannot* cease from sin. 2 Peter, ii. 14.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
June 16, 1837.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 388 – 389

COMMENTS ON I PETER I.

THERE is a peculiar sweetness and heavenly excellence in the manner, the language and the doctrine of this appeal to the understanding and heaven-bestowed knowledge of the scattered saints to whom it was addressed by the inspired apostle of the Lord Jesus. The circumstances under which they were struggling when this letter reached them at Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, and the thrill of heavenly rapture that warmed their hearts with gratitude to God and the Lamb on reading this divine communication, were happily alluded to by J. W. C., in one of his letters published in our last number. No learned rabbi of the Hebrew family, nor polished graduate of our modern schools, has ever been able to communicate the truth of heaven in such God-honoring and soul-cheering language. This uneducated fisherman, having received his knowledge of Christ from God, and not from flesh and blood, was abundantly qualified to feed the sheep and lambs of Jesus with the good and wholesome doctrine of God our Savior. Into what insignificance are all the learned and classical rules of modern theology, whereby men endeavor to divide the gospel into doctrine, experience, exhortation, and what they call practical godliness, sunken, when contrasted with the clear, forcible and heaven-inspired words of this servant of Jesus.

In the first verse of this letter he announces himself an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered abroad. In the second he encircles them all in that election of. grace, which is in accordance with the foreknowledge of God the Father, and through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and to the atonement or sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, and pronounces on them the apostolic benediction.

In the third he ascribes blessings to the Father of our Lord, and shows that he is not only the Father of our Lord in that he has begotten him from the dead, but that he has begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the same quickening display of the exceeding greatness of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. The vitality of this hope is nobly expressed, a *living hope* by the resurrection of Jesus. Both the hope and the soul by it inspired are animated with the same life from the same source, by the same-resurrection. He who died for our offences was raised for our justification.

In his fourth verse he connects the christian's lively hope with an incorruptible, undefiled and unfading inheritance which is reserved in heaven for them.

In the fifth verse he shows that not only the inheritance, but also the heirs, are reserved, and preserved by the power of God unto the consummation of the glory of the latter, to be revealed at the last time. How very striking the contrast between this doctrine and that of the popular divines of this degenerate age. It is at this time falsely declared and finally believed by a vast majority of professors of christianity that the saints are kept only, if kept at all, by the power of n; by the persevering efforts, resolutions, prayers, virtues, works and sacrifices of men. Such men may have a hope, but alas! their hope shall perish; it has no origin in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, but with the volition of their own will; is not begotten of God, but founded upon a false conception of the character and attributes of God, and sustained by a delusive notion that they have made themselves by their own works, too holy to remain in danger of his wrath. The saints are begotten of God, and by the power of God they are preserved to their inheritance, and by that same power the inheritance is reserved in heaven for them. Immutable certainty animates and cheers the faith of all the heirs of

salvation, while the strong decrees of God, the two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, the oath, the promise, the pledge, the earnest already received, link the hears of promise and their ultimate inheritance in such indisoluble bond that neither life nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, can disconnect them.

In verse sixth the apostle shows, to the eternal confusion of every Arminian workmonger, that this doctrine neither produces apathy, presumption nor sorrow in those to whom it belongs; so far, indeed, from being adverse to a life of godliness in the saints, in it they greatly rejoice, even when surrounded by circumstances of the most disheartening character; and while manifold temptations, for the time being, if need be, cause heaviness, yet do they still greatly rejoice in this blessed doctrine.

In the seventh verse he shows that all their trials, temptations and consequent heaviness are, in quantity, quality, duration and result, regulated by the *needs be* mentioned in the preceeding verse. They cannot be dispensed with, for they are precious – very valuable for the trial of their faith be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.

The apostle goes on to show that the faith of the saints supersedes the necessity of carnal sight. Whom having not seen, ye love. In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory. The joy of the saints in the doctrine of Christ, in the faith of the gospel, cannot be described; no tongue can convey the knowledge of it to the carnal sense of man; for it is unspeakable. And this faith, leaping over the intervening "moments of pain and months of wo," puts the heaven-born

soul into the possession of his estate. “Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.”

In sweetest harmony with his declaration in the second verse, that their election was according to the foreknowledge and prior design or decree of God, he proceeds to show that of this salvation the ancient prophets had early intimations, which led them to a diligent inquiry as to the time, that the spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified of his coming beforehand, and of his sufferings, and of the glory that should (not that might) follow. It was revealed to the prophets of Israel, that their predictions had reference to gospel times, and were concerning the same things which the gospel was and is the faithful reporter of, for these very things were reported to the scattered saints by them that had preached the gospel unto them, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things, he adds, the angels, (or messengers, as in verses 10 and 11,) desire to look into.

Inasmuch, therefore, as God had blessed the eyes and ears of these New Testament saints, that they should see and hear things that kings and prophets were not permitted to see nor hear; the apostle presents this distinguishing goodness of God to them, not as an opiate to lull them to sleep, but as a strong incentive to gird up the loins of their mind, to be sober, to hope to the end, for the grace that was to be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Whether the apostle here alluded to the revelation of Jesus, when he should be revealed on the throne of his glory, and those who had followed him in the regeneration sitting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes, or the glory that should be developed, when he should call them to behold his glory in the consummation of their happiness in the eternal heavens, will not effect the general doctrine in its bearing on us at the present day; and as all our brethren are not agreed

upon this point, we wish not in these remarks to agitate the subject. That to which we desire more particularly at this time to call the attention of our readers is, that the doctrine of sovereign, invincible, electing, preserving and infallible grace, sparkling with inexpressible beauty in every verse of this chapter, has a certain and infallible tendency to produce in the saints holiness of life and deportment. On the consideration of this, the inspired writer founds his exhortations to the saints, to be sober, not fanatic; to hope unto the end; to be obedient children; not fashioning themselves according to former lusts; to holiness; to call upon the Father, in their devotions at his throne of mercy and grace, and to pass the time of their sojourning in the fear of the Lord.

Unto all these things the apostle exhorts his brethren, not as a price for their salvation, but from the assurance they had of salvation by grace alone.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold," &c., "but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb, - without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God," &c., the most desirable treasures of the earth lose all their value when compared with the blood of Jesus. Gold and silver, however highly regarded by men, are but corruptible things; they must perish with other substances of the earth, neither is there any investment we can make of the precious metals that can exempt them or any thing that they can buy from corruption. The *some,* nay the many souls which Mr. A. Judson proposes to save from quenchless fires of hell, with gold and silver jewels, are not-redeemed as were those unto whom the apostle made the foregoing appeal. Not all the treasures of earth would answer the demands of law and

justice for the transgressions of those who were *elected according to the foreknowledge of God.*

"The blood of Christ and that alone
Hath power sufficient to atone."

If all the glittering treasures of the earth could possibly have been received as an equivalent, the precious blood of Christ would have been spared; the tears he wept, the cries he uttered, the agony he endured, and the blood he sweat in the garden, might all have been spared; his crown of thorns, the rugged cross, the spear, the nails, the darkened sky, the quaking earth, the rending rocks, dividing veil, retreating sun, opening graves, and all the awful grandeur of Mt. Calvary might have been averted. One sovereign word from his lips could have made the whole globe disclose at once all the treasures it contained, and as it all belonged to him, with it, and not his blood, the debt might have been cancelled.

But the subjects of this address knew better; they had not been nor could be redeemed with such corruptible things. The sacrifices required by the Jewish ritual could be obtained in any quantity for gold and silver; but they could not purge the conscience of those who presented: them from sin or from dead works, hence the superior virtues of the flowing blood of our Lord Jesus is an incentive to holiness of life and deportment to every soul unto whom that blood has been experimentally applied.

The blood of Christ shed for the redemption of his people was as the blood of a lamb without blemish and without spot, answering to the types used under the former dispensation. No blemished lamb was admitted in the type, and so the spotless Redeemer was found holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens.

"For he who could for sins atone
Must have no blemish of his own."

How distinguishing and how abundant was that grace that made known to the primitive saints that neither the scrutiny of the law nor of justice could find any spot or blemish in him who laid down his life for his people. Nor could one fortuitous circumstance be found in connection with this redemption; nothing premature or unlooked for in regard to the character or qualifications of the Redeemer, the amount or manner of his sufferings, the virtue or efficacy of his blood, the time or place of his crucifixion, the number or the identity of those for whom he endured the cross and despised the shame. Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God that raised him up from the dead, &c. Of the decrees of God we have no knowledge beyond what is his divine pleasure to reveal unto us. The developments of *these last times* establish the sublime truth that he was ordained, for those who by him do believe in God, before the foundation of the world. Hence, Paul speaks of him as "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." - Rev. xiii. 8. There is a wide difference between being ordained for his people, before the foundation of the world, and his being a Lamb slain from the foundation. The provision of grace and mercy, the counsel, and decrees of God were prior to the work of creation, and the foundation of the world was laid for the ultimate accomplishment of those previous designs; but the manifestation of this foreordination was figuratively from the foundation of the world; from the firstling of the flock which Abel offered, and all the rivers of blood flowing from the altars of the patriarchs and of the family of Israel, until he was personally, anti-typically and really offered, when he cried with a loud voice and yielded up the Ghost on Calvary.

The definite nature of the atonement is also clearly asserted by the apostle in this connection. Not for every one; not for those who by themselves, by an exertion of inherent powers of what they call free agency, but for such as *by him* do believe in God, and for them exclusively. How mortifying to the flesh; how withering to the pride of those who talk of bringing men to believe in God, by the power of "moral suasion," by human agencies of any kind whatever, to hear that the application of the redemption effected by the precious blood of Jesus was made exclusively to those who by him do believe in God, leaving all others who by any other name or means profess to believe in God among the thieves and robbers, who enter not by the door of the sheepfold, but climb up some other way, unprovided for.

The ordination before the foundation of the world, is that which has unchangeably fixed the destiny of all the heirs of salvation, and the manifestation of the immutable decrees are intended to establish their faith and hope in God. Those happy souls to whom this grace is given obey the truth: for it not only has a tendency to lead them to holiness, but the truth shall make them free. They have purified their souls, not by substituting something of their own in place of the blood of Jesus, but by obeying the truth, forsaking error, and thus throwing off all the pollution of unbelief. The happy consequence of believing and walking in the truth, besides releasing from error, is that it directs the faith and hope of such purified believers to God, while all such as participate not in this truth through the spirit, continue in error, and their faith is still in human agency, and their hope is based upon their delusions. This purification of the soul, by obedience to the truth, is connected with unfeigned love of the brethren. There is no deception in their love who obey the truth; they have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty; no longer do they walk in craftiness, nor do they handle the word of God deceitfully. All pretensions to a love

of the brethren by those who obey not the truth, are as heartless as the kiss of Judas Iscariot, and as mercenary as those of modern missionary fund-gatherers.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
March 1, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 754 – 762

COMMISSION, INSTRUCTIONS, &C.,

Issued from the office of the Baptist Missionary Convention of the State of N.Y.

BUT few of our readers probably are prepared to believe that the Baptist Missionary Convention of this State have yet arrived at that state of consummate arrogance and lordly dominion over the independence of Baptist churches, and over those who are called the ministers of the everlasting gospel, as to require the former to bow to their legislation, and the latter to receive their commissions and instructions from their executive department. For the information of such we subjoin a copy of the *Bull,* sent by the convention to the Westmoreland church and their pastor, for which document we are indebted to the kindness of brother Richmond.

In defence of this assumption of ecclesiastic power, we are aware it will be urged that inasmuch as it is lawful for every one to do as he pleaseth with his own, that on the same ground the convention had a right to appropriate their funds as they please; but to this defence we have two objections: First, the principle of an individual's having the right to dispose of his own according to his pleasure, is disputed by this convention, whose latest minutes we have before us. We find this grave assemblage of dignitaries, including 1 President, 35 Vice-Presidents and 30 directors, in parliamentary form, legislating upon the destiny of the world, and voting away the moneys belonging to the Baptists of this State by tens of thousands, to be collected, appropriated and expended in such form as their Hons. - the Presidents, Directors & Co. of the convention, shall have decreed, viz: To the Home Mission, $10,000; the Tract Society, Sunday School Union, Literary and Theological institutions, &c., all that they

can extort from the people. Instead of allowing to individuals the right of disposing of their own property in their own way, they dictate to them the amount to be raised, and the objects to which the same shall be appropriated; hence we conclude this argument cannot belong to them.

Our second objection is, that although they have systematized their plans of mendicancy so far as to settle the amount of tax to be levied on each Baptist in our State, and to be able in anticipation of the proceeds, to make their appropriations, yet, being for the present destitute of such arguments as Sheriffs, writs, attachments, halters, flames and faggots, their publicans (tax-gatherers or agents) are under the necessity, when presenting what they term the *claims* of the convention, to tell the people that their money shall all be faithfully appropriated to the aid of feeble churches, indigent preachers, &c., so that upon the general principle of honesty the convention have no right to apply the money to any other use than the specific objects for which it was contributed.

Leaving, however, this part of the subject to be settled by this host of presidents, directors, &c., and their constituents, we pass to inquire to what class of preachers they belong, who can be bought and sold for money, or who will consent to receive a commission and pledge themselves' to obey the instructions of a convention? Is it likely that Simon Peter, who said the church was not redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, and who detested the filthy stuff when offered him by Simon Magos, would, if now on earth, consent to become the humble servant of the Missionary Convention, and agree to obey them for hire? No, he would say to them as he said to their proto-type, "Thy money perish with thee." Brethren, Christ has not left us in the dark on this subject; Christ has forbid his servants calling any man or set of men on earth father or waster, and the apostle

speaks of this subject as being so plain that all must know it. “His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey;” and our Lord forever settled the point that his disciples cannot serve two masters. But we see the troop who are commissioned by the convention can serve two masters according to their profession; they profess to serve Christ, and do in reality serve the convention; indeed they are required to do this by the commission they receive from the convention, for as the reader will observe by reference to the one copied into this paper, they are required to attend to Sunday Schools, Temperance Societies, and many other services no where enjoined by our Lord Jesus Christ, and to report progress in these things to their earthly masters four times a year; and in addition to this, their employers and paymasters enjoin upon them that they shall serve the Lord also, by devoting a part of their time to the preaching of the gospel. Now reader turn to the commission in question, read it and then say, are they not required to serve two masters who receive and act under the authority of a commission from the convention? None can dispute the fact. We then hare the answer to our inquiry negatively: they are not the disciples of Christ.

Let not this decision be viewed as the rash judgment of this article, but the unavoidable result of a close comparison of their commission with the express declaration of our Lord Jesus Christ, “Ye cannot serve two masters.” Here the previous question returns: To what class then do these hirelings belong, since it is plain from their own mouths and from the scriptures of truth, they are not the ministers of Christ? Our Lord again tells us that all who are not with him are against him, and as the word *anti* means against, we conclude they are anti-christ.

This decision indeed may seem severe, and they may tell us that anti-christ means the Pope of Rome and his patrons, but

what has his *Holiness* done more deserving of the title than their *Reverences* have? True, he has claimed the right to raise up, educate, prepare for the work, commission, instruct and send forth his Jesuits, or Missionaries, and so have they; he has directed his teachers to preach doctrines not only unwarranted by, but hostile to the bible, and so have they; he has delivered over to the secular powers such as would dispute his authority, and who will trust them when they shall have the. secular power on their side? Not the Old School Baptist.

In view of what has been said on this subject, is it to be expected that the churches do or will derive any spiritual aid from the New York Baptist Missionary Convention? The scriptures assures us that "Not one" can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. The convention itself is a creature made up of church and world, and bearing the name of Church and State, viz: Baptist is the name of a church, New York the name of a State. The first is a spiritual kingdom, the other is a worldly government; and as a convention comprising officers and power, derived primarily from the church and world, the convention being made up of both, the mongrel name it has assumed is very appropriate to express the nature of the *beast.* We say beast, for so it is called in the scriptures of truth; but we mean the image of the original Beast, "whose deadly wound was healed," (see Rev. xlii.) having a plurality of natures, heads and horns. Its foundation is money, and not Christ; the necessary qualification for membership in it is money, and not grace; governed by their own legislation and not the laws of Christ; employing those who are or can be the servants of two masters, and not the disciples of Christ; lording over the independence of Baptist churches, and not subject to the authority of the church; begging in some cases, and in others demanding m6noy for the professed object of aiding feeble churches and assisting indigent ministers of the gospel, and then refusing

appropriations to such churches unless they virtually relinquish into the hands of the convention their independence, and comply with such conditions as are set forth in their letter to the Westmoreland church; and requiring of such ministers as they see fit to assist, that they observe such parish boundaries as they prescribe, and binding them to visit schools, to encourage Sunday Schools, and a host of other human inventions, and to avoid reflections upon other denominations, &c.

Thus reader, fancy to yourself the minister who is bound by these instructions. His labors are confined to the bounds allotted him in his commission, and if the Lord should say to him, "Go in the way that looketh toward the South," to preach Christ, and to baptize an Ethiopian eunuch, he would then find it a hard matter to serve two masters. Here we can but see that his obligation to the convention utterly disqualifies him for being the servant of Christ; for to obey Christ he must disobey the other master; confined to the limits assigned him, he must visit such families only as reside within said limits, and preach the preaching which his employers have bidden him on all occasions, and under all circumstances; he must visit common schools, establish and superintend Sunday Schools and Bible Classes, and mingle a *powerful* moral, *alias* clerical influence in the whole system of youthful education; he is bound to observe the Monthly Concert, and on all such occasions to plead the Missionary cause; must be a stickler for Foreign and Domestic Missions, Education, Bible, Tract, Sunday School and Temperance Societies; he must urge upon the people of his charge the *N.Y. Baptist Register,* and a co-operation in the efforts of the domestic mission. All this he must do, and what may he not do? Why, he may not oppose error, nor contend for the truth of the gospel of Christ, nor contend for the supremacy of the laws of the King of Zion; for in so doing he would not only reflect on other denominations, but would also reproach

those from whom he has received his commission. Can a man of God, can a minister of Jesus Christ submit to all this bondage? We think not. Can their labors promote the cause of God, or perfect the saints? "I have not sent them, (saith the Lord,) yet they run; because I have not sent them, they shall not profit this people." Christians, examine this subject; read your bibles; "prove all things; hold fast that which is good," and admit nothing as good without scriptural authority.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO THE PASTOR OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN WESTMORELAND.

"Although the preaching of the gospel holds the first and highest place in the vows and responsibilities of the ministerial office, yet there are a variety of subordinate measures which with a view to the permanent and best effect of gospel ordinances, require the diligent attention of every pastor and every missionary. This is especially the case in congregations where, from their recent organization or other causes, the importance of religion and of religious instruction is not generally understood and felt. The Board therefore request your attention to the following measures, as important to be adopted and vigorously pursued in the station assigned you.

1. Without wishing to abridge your liberty or obligation, as a minister of Christ, as far as practicable to seek the spiritual good of the surrounding country, the Board will expect you to confine your labor's principally to the field designated in this commission, that the people, for whose benefit the aid of the convention in your support is especially designed, may learn from the influence of your uninterrupted efforts, suitably to appreciate the importance ,of a settled ministry, and that they may thus be induced and strengthened the sooner to

maintain the administration of christian ordinances without assistance from others.

2. The visitation of families, and of the sick, is particularly enjoined, as second in importance only to the public preaching of the word. In the performance of these duties, the Board will expect you to visit every family within the limits of your charge, which is not under the pastoral care of some other minister; and that you will feel the importance of making your visits strictly religious and ministerial, urging upon individuals, with faithfulness and affection, the necessity of repentance towards God and faith in one Lord Jesus Christ, and in families inculcating the importance of family religion

3. The visiting of schools, and the establishment and superintendence of Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes, are objects which claim your careful and zealous attention, and which the Board urge upon your notice with strong solicitude. These measures, dictated by benevolence and pursued with christian humility and kindness, will not fail, with the blessing of God, to give you access to the best affections of the youth of your charge, and will thus secure to you the delightful and important privilege of mingling a correct and powerful moral influence in the whole system of their education.

4. Meetings for prayer should be held at such convenient times and places as shall afford to all the families within your charge the privilege of attending them. These meetings the Board will expect you to encourage and promote; and particularly that you will hold the monthly concert for prayer Of this it is desirable that you give previous public notice from the pulpit, and that you make it an occasion for communicating to the people, in a concise form, such missionary intelligence as you shall have received during the preceding month.

5. The Board take a deep and lively interest in the cause of Foreign as well as Domestic Missions, and in the objects of the Education, Bible, Tract and Sabbath School societies, and will expect you, by every laudable means, to promote these great enterprises of christian benevolence. You are particularly desired to solicit the co-operation of your people, as, far as they have ability, in the work of domestic missions; And to promote the circulation of the New York *Baptist Register.*

6. The Board regard, with great pleasure and gratitude to God, the recent efforts of many churches, physicians and leading civilians of our country, for the promotion of temperance. Among the numerous and deplorable evils resulting from the use of ardent spirits, none is more universal than that of counteracting all the means which God has appointed for the moral improvement of mankind, and the salvation of souls. You are desired therefore, publicly and privately to instruct the people to whom you minister, respecting the causes, symptoms and fatal consequences of intemperance, and endeavor to persuade them to abstain from the use of intoxicating drinks.

Lastly, and particularly, it is desired that not only "in doctrine you be uncorrupt," but that you "show yourself a pattern of good works," "by manifestation of the truth, commending yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." As an embassador of the Prince of Peace, "follow peace with all men;" and, avoiding reflections upon other denominations of christians, let your conversation in the world show that you have at heart, not the interests of a sect or party, but the salvation of souls and the prosperity of the Redeemer's cause. Be eminently a man of prayer; and, as you are bound to do by the terms of your own consecration to the work of the ministry, "preach Christ and him crucified." Be faithful unto death, and the fruit of your labor will be "unto holiness,

and the end everlasting life." Signed by order of the Board, - C. G. CARPENTER, Secy."

Office of the Baptist Missionary Convention of the State of New York, Utica, November 20, 1834.
To the Baptist church called First Westmoreland:

"Having learned that a door is open for preaching the gospel among you, and that you cannot obtain sufficient means to sustain an acceptable minister, and that the prospects are so encouraging as to justify further expenditures for sustaining the ministry of the word and pastoral labors, the Board of the Baptist Missionary Convention of the State of New York has appropriated thirty dollars to aid you in this object, to be paid either wholly or partly in money as our treasury may admit, when the following conditions shall have been fulfilled, viz:

1. That you enjoy the faithful labors of a pastor who shall be approved by this Board, and shall regard the accompanying instructions, as far as consistent, for the period of one year from October 16th, 1834.

2. That the plans of the convention, for diffusing information, and for raising funds for the various benevolent objects, be fully presented and faithfully prosecuted, especially that you raise as large an amount for Domestic Missions as shall be practicable.

3. That you receive no additional foreign aid for the above named period.

4. That you forward to the Secretary, on the first day of January, April, July and October, a report of the labors of your pastor, the number of sermons preached by him among you, the number added by letter and by baptism, the whole number of members, a general statement of their pecuniary condition and prospects, their activity and zeal in religious

duties, the course of meetings usually attended in the church, the amount contributed for each of the benevolent objects, and for the ministry among you, the state of the society and congregation, of Sabbath Schools, Temperance Societies, &c., and in general, of whatever will tend to give a correct view of your state and of the benefits of the ministry among you.

If on examination of your report it shall appear that the above conditions have been fulfilled, you will receive an order on our treasury for thirty dollars. Signed by order of the Board, - C. G. CARPENTER, Secy.”

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
February 18, 1835.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 203 – 211

THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." - Mark xvi. 15.

TRUE to the promise made to our correspondent at Burdett, in our last number, we will give a brief expression of our views upon the above text. We regret the want of room to give our mind more fully on this important subject, as we conceive it to be most awfully and wickedly perverted by the popular theologians of our day. It is by them perverted to mean anything and everything but the truth. They quote it as a full and sufficient warrant for theological seminaries and colleges; they profess to be governed by it in the formation of Mission Societies, adn profess obedience to it in getting up and sustaining Sunday Schools; they inscribe these words as a motto upon the frontlet of their tracts, and other popular religious publications; and in short they would use it to sustain any practice they may choose to adopt.

And yet how very simple and plain the language is, when stripped of the sophistry and confusion into which the subject is thrown by the artful management of those who handle the word of God deceitfully. This text, like all others from the same source, is spoken with divine authority; and in the investigation of the subject, we will first notice the commander; second, the persons addressed; third, the command given; and lastly, the inference we are warranted to draw from the subject.

1st. Who is the commander? This is a very important question in the consideration of the subject in our estimation; for we hold that there is but **one** being in existence, either in heaven or on earth, who is clothed with such authority to give such commands; hence whoud we -, should an angel from heaven, or a Missionary Society on earth, say to any of

the sons of Adam, Go ye and preach the gospel, it would me most daring presumption, and woe to the wretch who would obey our command. The commander in this case is none other than the Lord from heaven; and he prefaced this exhibition of his power and Godhead, by assuring his disciples that all power is given unto him in heaven and in earth. See Matt. xxviii. 18; very evidently implying that less power would not be sufficient to authorize any one to issue this supreme command; but assuring them that he was in full possession of all the power of both worlds, said unto them, Go ye therefore. This divine commander is then the Almighty God, the great and glorious Head of his church, and the Supreme Monarch of his kingdom. At his command his heralds fly, and his gospel is proclaimed.

"He looks and ten thousand of angels rejoice,
And myriads await for his word;
He speaks, and eternity, filled with his voice,
Re-echoes the praise of her lord."

2d. The people to whom this command was addressed. It has been very common with christians to suppose that this text was addressed to all those who in every age are divinely called to preach the gospel; and that a very similar commission, in may respects, is given by our Lord Jesus Christ to every one whom he has called to that work, we do not doubt; but those words were addressed exclusively to the eleven disciples whom it was his pleasure to name apostles. We have already shown that many at this degenerate age attempt to apply this commission to the various schemes and inventions of the day. We recollect seeing some twelve months ago, if our recollection serves correctly, an advertisement in the **Baptist Repository** of New York, calling for **six hundred** persons to distribute tracts in that city, in obedience to the command "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel!" We are persuaded that every candid

child of God is fully prepared to say with us that this commission belongs to none but such as are specially called and chosen of God to that work.

If our space would serve, we should here look a little into the manner of the calling adn qualifications of the eleven, and of all others whom the God of heaven has called to preach his everlasting gospel. They were not called or enticed by the glittering charm of gold, for they held that the love of money was the root of all evil; (what a strange creed for this day!) nor were they qualified by colleges or theological seminaries, neither were they employed or sustained by mission societies. But they were men of god, born of his Spirit, and generally illiterate, as God's ministers are to this day. Only think what sort of an agent for modern purposes Peter would make, if he were now on earth, to tell Simon, "Thy money perish with thee. Thou hast thought the gifts of the Holy Ghost might be bought with money," &c. Would not our modern missionaries rather say, Give us the money and perish for aught we care? Paul, too, would make an odd figure at that business, unless he would quit working with his own hands to administer to his necessities, and to those that were with him.

And can our readers believe that God, who changes not, now delights in a different class of ministers, of opposite sentiments, greedy for filthy lucre? **Impossible**.

We come **thirdly** to notice the command, Go **ye** - not **send others**; this would certainly be an awful perversion of the word of God. Who does not know the sense of language better than to ignorantly fall into so fatal a blunder? Go ye, i.e., yourselves, those to whom our Lord addressed the command, into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature. The extent of the divine command is not to be restricted for want of funds, for the Lord told his disciples

that he would go with them, so there was no fear. they knew that he who rained down manna into the camp of ancient Israel, who fed Elijah by the ravens, who blessed the loaves and fishes, could, and would, if it should be necessary, call up the fish of the sea with money in their mouths to answer all necessary purposes. No parish bounds were set; their field of labor was **all the world**. These eleven, in the very sense of this text, went everywhere preaching the word. See 20th verse.

The executive committee of the mission societies do attempt to ape or mimic the work of the Lord, by their enchantments, as did their brethren, the magicians of old, the work of Moses and Aaron. They call men, put them through their theological factory, give them what they presumptuously call a commission, appoint to them the field of their labor, direct them when, where and what to preach, and then pay them by the day, month or year their hire. But these being the hirelings of the mission societies are not the servants of Christ, for no man can serve two masters.

But this command not only designates the men, and points out to them the field of their labor, but it directs them what to do: **preach the gospel**. There is no authority here given to play off seminary airs, read notes or beg money, for after all these things do the Gentiles seek, but preach the gospel. The term gospel means now precisely what it always did, and the apostles in obedience to this very command preached eternal, personal and unconditional election. - See Eph. i.3; 2 Thess. ii.13; 2 Tim. ii.9. They preached Predestination in the most absolute sense of the term. - See Eph. i.5,11; Rom. viii. 28,30; Acts ii. 23, and iv. 27,28. They preached the atonement of Christ specially and definitely for the elect, and for them exclusively. - Rom. iv. 25; Eph. v. 25; Titus ii.14; 1 Peter i. 19,21; Heb. x. 14. In short, they taught the disciples to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded, and

to let any and every man or angel be accursed who should preach any other gospel.

In **conclusion**, we were to note some few plain inferences. **1st**. As all the power in heaven and in earth was indispensably involved in qualifying the great Redeemer for the work of calling, qualifying, sending forth and sustaining the ministers of the gospel; there are, and can be none of his ministers on earth at this day but what are so called, qualified, sustained, &c., and consequently all such as do arrogantly assume this work, and pretend to call, qualify or send forth ministers, or to do any part of this work, are anti-christ. Second, Inasmuch as Christ has all power, he can, and does call into the ministry whomsoever he pleaseth, independently of all the schemes of men. If, therefore, he has occasion for learned men, the learned are at his command; and the only reason why the church has not a more plentiful supply of faithful and talented ministers, is not occasioned by bankruptcy on his part, but is simply because he has not seen fit at present to call them to the work. Again, as the work is wholly his own, he is as able to raise up the natives of Burmah, Hindostan, or the Indians of our woods, as any of those whom human wisdom might suggest.

2d. As this commission was addressed to none but such as were designated by our Lord, and can apply to none others without manifest violation of its proper sense or meaning, it is insulting to the divine majesty for us to so far abuse its meaning as to apply it to the peddling of tracts, and the promulgation of error, or the building up of the various inventions of men or devils, whether they be called **benevolent** or otherwise.

3d. As the command plainly expresses what those unto whom a divine application of it is made are to do, there can be no place found in the sense of this, or any other bible

arrant, for building or sustaining of theological institutions for that purpose of teaching such as are so called what their Lord and Master would have them do. As their calling is of God - and the King's business always requires haste - it would amount ot rebellion, if not treason, for any one of his called ministers to spend any time to learn, in any humanly contrived school, how or what to preach in his name. We are unavoidably driven to the conclusion, that no minister of Jesus Christ ever has or will be detained any longer in such a place than he could be in teh belly of hell. The sever but irresistible conclusion therefore is, that all the pupils of these Gamaliels of our day are the prophets of Baal, and are fed at the table of that pious old lady called Jezebel, whose children our God has promised to kill with death. - Rev. ii. 23

Lastly, we would say to our brother in Burdett, and to all our readers, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Therefore, brethren, try the spirits, whether they are of God, or whether they are not rather of men; and always remember that God in his holy word has set this indelible mark on all the watchmen of antichrist: "they are all greedy dogs that can never have enough."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.
July 22, 1835

Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE COMMISSION

“And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark 16:15, 16.

Although we have on a former occasion expressed our views on the above text, we feel disposed to comply with the request of sister Wadsworth who has again called for them. It is a matter of deep interest and pleasing contemplation that the great Jehovah has, in the plentitude of his goodness and mercy, ordained that the gospel of his grace should be proclaimed unto any of the guilty sons of men; and especially that apostles and other ministers of the word should be raised up and qualified to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. When we remember the fallen state that the whole human family was plunged into by our transgression of the law of our Creator, it truly seems astonishing to us that instead of the rich provisions of grace and mercy displayed in the gift of God’s dear Son and the way of life and salvation through the abounding grace of God that we were not consigned to the perdition of ungodly men, and made as miserable as we had become sinful before our God. But instead of vengeance justly due to our transgressions, the eternal purpose of grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, is revealed from heaven, and a commision is given to the apostles of the Lamb, and to all others to whom it has been the pleasure of our God to apply that commission to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Christ had made his advent to our guilty world, had done and suffered all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets; and bearing all the sins of all his people in his own

body on the tree, had suffered bled and died, the just for the unjust, to redeem his people unto God. - He had risen from the dead and was about to ascend in triumph to the skies; but before he left the little band of his disciples he had one more solemn charge to give them, and one more lesson of instruction to impart to them. This he prepared them for by breathing upon them, saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost”; thus signifying that without an unction of the Holy Spirit no man can be qualified to preach the gospel. He then informed them that “All power in heaven and in earth” was vested in him; and that no less than all the power of both worlds was indispensible to give validity to a gospel commission. No set of ecclesiastical dignitaries, however learned or celebrated for wisdom and piety, can without presumptious arrogance pretend to direct, commission, or send forth missionaries to proclaim his gospel. All power in heaven and in earth was, and still is, necessary to defend and prosper the ministry of the gospel. Now risen from the dead, and seated upon his Mediatorial throne, his arm was mighty to rule for him. His power was over all flesh that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father had given unto him. “And he said unto them, Go ye,” etc.

But unto whom did he say, “Go ye”? The popular missionists of our day contend that this commission was given to all the church, and some of them contend that it was given to all men; but we learn from the connection, as well as from the words of the commission that it was given only to chosen disciples of our Lord; to those on whom Christ has breathed, those whom he had instructed and qualified for the work. Unto these he said, “Go ye!” But he did not say unto them, “Send others”; but “Go ye”; and he possessed all power, his word is as effectual in sending them forth as it was when he said, “Let there be light, and there was light”; for we are informed in the 20th verse that they went forth and preached, etc., as they were commanded. Jesus is the King

of saints, and where the word of a king is, there is power. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands and it is done; none can stay his hand, or prevent the accomplishment of his decrees. But where did he commission these, his apostles, to go? Just where we understand he commissions all his ministers since the apostolic age to go; namely, *into* all the world. Circumscribed by no parish lines, to be restricted by no barriers that men can raise; the whole world opens before the called, qualified and commissioned servants of the Lord as the appointed field of their labors, wherever God, in his providence, shall open a door for them. Before the crucifixion and resurrection these disciples, and the seventy also, were forbidden to go in the way of the Gentiles, or into any city of the Samaritans, but they were to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But now the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles was thrown down, the hand-writing of ordinances by which Israel was distinguished and the Gentiles excluded, was nailed to the cross, the enmity, even the law of commandments taken out of the way, and the whole world presented under the dominion of him unto whom the Father has given the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, that he might break them with a rod of iron, and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel. Psa. ii.8, 9. Now therefore the time had come for the enlargement of the commission. Therefore He said unto them, “Go ye into all the world.” No more confine your ministry to the cities of Judaea, or to the people of a fleshly circumcision, but into every nation, kindred and tongue he bade them go; for this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Having learned where, we will now enquire unto whom the ministers of Christ are commissioned to preach his gospel. This question is met and settled by the words of the commission. They are commanded to preach it to every creature. To preach the gospel, be it remembered, is to proclaim in

Christ's name and by his authority, that perfect, finished and complete salvation which is in Christ Jesus. It is not the reading of Moses, or the setting forth the demands or curses of the law; neither is it the calling on men to save themselves, nor commanding them to repent or to believe, or to exercise faith, nor is it to tell them that they are free agents, and have all power in their hands to make their peace with God. Christ has given no man or set of men authority to preach in that manner to the children of men; for such preaching is false, and a perversion of the gospel of our blessed Redeemer. There is much said by will-worshipers and arminians at this day about preaching the gospel to sinners; and they charge that we Old Baptists do not preach to sinners. And why do they thus charge us? Simply because we do not apply the promises and blessings of the new covenant to unregenerate men, - because we do not say to them what Christ said only to his disciples, "Seek and ye shall find: knock and it shall be opened unto you; ask and it shall be given unto you," etc. And while they proclaim the doctrine of free will and human agency in the salvation of sinners and offer Christ and salvation conditionally to the ungodly, they claim that they are fulfilling the commission and are preaching the gospel to every creature. The truth is, they preach the gospel to nobody, neither to saints nor sinners; for they know nothing of the gospel themselves. They are blind leaders of the blind, and they shall all fall into the ditch together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. To preach the gospel is to preach the Word. It is to preach Christ and to proclaim to Jews and Gentiles, to saints and sinners, that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him: - that all that the Father giveth him shall come unto him, and he that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out. And also, "No man can come unto me except my Father which has sent me draw him; and I will raise him up again at the last day." It is to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name, that

He is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins; - that repentance is as truly and exclusively the gift of the exalted Prince and Savior as is the forgiveness of sins. We speak of that repentance which is unto life. To preach that Salvation is of the Lord: He is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Neither is there salvation in any other name. Will our opponents deny that Paul preached the gospel when he proclaimed among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and when in so preaching Christ he affirmed that God had blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. - That God had saved and called them with a holy calling, not according to their works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. - That whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. And when he declared that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will, he hardeneth; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy. Also when he proclaimed to the saints which were at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus saying, “And you hath he quickened which were dead in trespasses and sins. For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.”

This, together with all that Paul and all the other apostles preached, comes to us under the high authority of divine inspiration, as the gospel of Christ. And if an angel from heaven should preach any other gospel than that which was preached by the apostles, let him be accursed. This is the gospel of the kingdom, and it is to be preached in all the world, wherever God shall send his ministers, and to every creature; that is, to Gentiles as well as Jews, to sinners and to saints, and never to be withheld. God's ministers are not to shun to declare this glorious gospel on all suitable occasions, and as they preach, "Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." All who are born of God love this gospel, as far as they understand it, they rejoice in it; it is their meat and their drink; while on the other hand, all who hate God and love sin will as certainly hate his truth. Hence this gospel of the kingdom is a witness, discriminating between the quickened and the unregenerated sons of men. Those who can understand what the gospel in reality is will readily perceive that the thousands who in this day boast of their missionary spirit, and of their zeal in causing what they call the gospel to be preached throughout the world, would be among the very first, if they had the power, to stop the mouths of every minister of Jesus who faithfully proclaims the gospel to every creature. The gospel which Christ commissioned his apostles to preach is the power of God, through faith unto salvation to every one that believes. But the gospel which ungodly men admire, and which they are ever ready to embrace and support is, in its theory, the power of men, through works, means, and instrumentalities, unto what, in their delusions, they regard as salvation. Let us not mistake, as some have, and conclude the preaching is the power of God unto salvation. The preaching is one thing and the thing preached is quite another, and the excellency of this power is of God, and not of the preacher. Men may, and often do, hear gospel preaching, but they always remain strangers to the gospel

until God applies its power to their hearts, unto salvation. But we must pass - .

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Certainly not as a reward for believing or being baptized; for then would salvation be by works and conditional, which the scriptures quoted above fully prove to us is not the case; for if it be of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work; and if it be by grace, it is no more of works. It cannot be of both, for if of the one, then it is not of the other, and we have proved beyond all successful contradiction that it is of grace, and equally positively that is not of works. That faith by which we believe the gospel of Christ is the gift of God, the fruit of the spirit, and Christ is himself both the author and the finisher of it. Hence we are told that "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." And Paul said to the Thessalonian saints, "We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." Baptism is indeed an act of the believer, in obedience of a divine command, which command is given only to believers. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." So said Philip to the Eunuch. As therefore we cannot possess saving faith until born of that spirit of which faith is the fruit, so neither can any man obey Christ in being baptized until he has become a regenerated person, a believer in Christ. The faith and obedience of the children of God are not the cause but the evidence and effects of their salvation. And thus they are given in the commission, as the essential marks or evidences by which all of Christ's commissioned apostles and ministers shall also recognize them as his saved people, and by which they shall also recognize each other. But what are they to believe? They are to believe the truth as it is in Jesus; for they who believe that which is not truth are deluded, and they to whom strong

delusions are sent, as we are informed, believe a lie, that they all may be damned. To believe that we are able to save ourselves by our own works, or that there is salvation in an anxious bench, or in anything short of the person, blood, and righteousness of God our Savior, is a delusion, and all who are suffered to live and die in that delusion shall be damned; for so the scriptures positively affirm. As these were the evidences of a regenerated state when the gospel commission was given, so they continue to be down to this day. We fairly infer therefore that none but Baptists, of the old apostolic school, or order, can exhibit the full and clear evidence that they are regenerated and born of God. Neither faith nor baptism is regeneration; but both are evidences of a regenerated state. He that believeth and is baptized is, of course, a baptized believer, and as in the mouth of two witnesses, under the ceremonial economy every word was required to be established, so now under the gospel dispensation a profession of faith alone, however satisfactory it may be as far as it goes, does not entitle a person to the privileges of the house of God. That faith, if genuine, must be expressed by obedience as well as by words; and when these two witnesses are presented, they are all that we have a right to ask by way of testimony that they who give them are of that people whom God has saved with an everlasting salvation. Where these evidences are given, and they who present them, continue to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God blamelessly, so long they are entitled to all the privileges of the church of God, and to the fellowship of all the saints.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 35 - 42

THE COMMISSION

“And He said unto them. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” Mark 16:15,16.

It is a matter of deep interest and pleasing contemplation that the great Jehovah has, in the plentitude of his goodness and mercy, ordained that the gospel of his grace should be proclaimed unto any of the guilty sons of men; and especially that apostles and other ministers of the word should be raised up and qualified to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. When we remember the fallen state that the whole human family was plunged into by our transgression of the law of our Creator, it truly seems astonishing to us that instead of the rich provisions of grace and mercy displayed in the gift of God’s dear Son and the way of life and salvation through the abounding grace of God that we were not consigned to the perdition of ungodly men, and made as miserable as we had become sinful before our God. But instead of vengeance justly due to our transgressions, the eternal purpose of grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, is revealed from heaven, and a commission is given to the apostles of the Lamb, and to all others to whom it has been the pleasure of our God to apply that commission to “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Christ had made his advent to our guilty world, had done and suffered all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets; and bearing all the sins of all his people in his own body on the tree, had suffered bled and died, the just for the unjust, to redeem his people unto God.- He had risen from the dead and was about to ascend in triumph to the skies;

but before he left the little band of his disciples he had one more solemn charge to give them, and one more lesson of instruction to impart to them. This he prepared them for by breathing upon them, saying, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost”; thus signifying that without an unction of the Holy Spirit no man can be qualified to preach the gospel. He then informed them that “All power in heaven and in earth” was vested in him; and that no less than all the power of both worlds was indispensable to give validity to a gospel commission. No set of ecclesiastical dignitaries, however learned or celebrated for wisdom and piety, can without presumptuous arrogance pretend to direct, commission, or send forth missionaries to proclaim his gospel. All power in heaven and in earth was, and still is, necessary to defend and prosper the ministry of the gospel. Now risen from the dead, and seated upon his Mediatorial throne, his arm was mighty to rule for him. His power was over all flesh that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father had given unto him. “And he said unto them, Go ye,” etc.

But unto whom did he say, “Go ye”? The popular missionists of our day contend that this commission was given to all the church, and some of them contend that it was given to all men; but we learn from the connection, as well as from the words of the commission that it was given only to chosen disciples of our Lord; to those on whom Christ has breathed, -those whom he had instructed and qualified for the work. Unto these he said, “Go ye!” But he did not say unto them, “Send others”; but “Go ye”’ and he possessed all power, his word is as effectual in sending them forth as it was when he said, “Let there be light, and there was light”; for we are informed in the 20th verse that they went forth and preached, etc., as they were commanded. Jesus is the King of saints, and where the word of a king is, there is power. He speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands and it is done; none can stay his hand, or prevent the

accomplishment of his decrees. But where did he commission these, his apostles, to go? Just where we understand he commissions all his ministers since the apostolic age to go; namely, into all the world. Circumscribed by no parish lines, to be restricted by no barriers that men can raise; the whole world opens before the called, qualified and commissioned servants of the Lord as the appointed field of their labors, wherever God, In his providence, shall open a door for them. Before the crucifixion and resurrection these disciples, and the seventy also, were forbidden to go in the way of the Gentiles, or into any city of the Samaritans, but they were to go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But now the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles was thrown down, the hand-writing of ordinances by which Israel was distinguished and the Gentiles excluded, was nailed to the cross, the enmity, even the law of commandments taken out of the way, and the whole world presented under the dominion of him unto whom the Father has given the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, that he might break them with a rod of iron, and dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel. Psa. 11.8,9. Now therefore the time had come for the enlargement of the commission. Therefore He said unto them, “Go ye into all the world.” No more confine your ministry to the cities of Judea, or to the people of a fleshly circumcision, but into every nation, kindred and tongue he bade them go; for this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Having learned where, we will now enquire unto whom the ministers of Christ are commissioned to preach his gospel. This question is met and settled by the words of the commission. They are commanded to preach It to every creature. To preach the gospel, be it remembered, is to proclaim in Christ’s name and by his authority, that perfect, finished and complete salvation which is in Christ Jesus. It is not the reading of Moses, or the setting forth the

demands or curses of the law; neither is it the calling on men to save themselves, nor commanding them to repent or to believe, or to exercise faith, nor is it to tell them that they are free agents, and have all power in their hands to make their peace with God. Christ has given no man or set of men authority to preach in that manner to the children of men; for such preaching is false, and a perversion of the gospel of our blessed Redeemer. There is much said by will-worshippers and arminians at this day about preaching the gospel to sinners; and they charge that we Old Baptists do not preach to sinners. And why do they thus charge us? Simply because we do not apply the promises and blessings of the new covenant to unregenerate men, - because we do not say to them what Christ said only to his disciples, "Seek and ye shall find: knock and It shall be opened unto you; ask and it shall be given unto you, "etc. And while they proclaim the doctrine of freewill and human agency in the salvation of sinners and offer Christ and salvation conditionally to the ungodly, they claim that they are fulfilling the commission and are preaching the gospel to every creature. The truth is, they preach the gospel to nobody, neither to saints nor sinners; for they know nothing of the gospel themselves. They are blind leaders of the blind, and they shall all fall into the ditch together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it. To preach the gospel is to preach the Word. It is to preach Christ and to proclaim to Jews and Gentiles, to saints and sinners, that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him: - that all that the Father giveth him shall come unto him, and he that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out. And also, "No man can come unto me except my Father which has sent me draw him; and I will raise him up again at the last day." It Is to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name, that He is exalted a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance unto Israel and the forgiveness of sins; -that repentance is as truly and exclusively the gift of the exalted Prince and Savior

as is the forgiveness of sins. We speak of that repentance which is unto life. To preach that Salvation is of the Lord: He is God, and beside him there is no Savior. Neither is there salvation in any other name. Will our opponents deny that Paul preached the gospel when he proclaimed among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and when in so preaching Christ he affirmed that God had blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he had chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. - That God had saved and called them with a holy calling, not according to their works but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. - That whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified. And when he declared that God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will, he hardeneth; that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy. Also when he proclaimed to the saints which were a Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus saying, “And you hath he quickened which were dead in trespasses and sins.” “For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it Is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.”

This, together with all that Paul and all the other apostles preached, comes to us under the high authority of divine inspiration, as the gospel of Christ. And if any angel from heaven should preach any other gospel than that which was

preached by the apostles, let him be accursed. This is the gospel of the kingdom, and it is to be preached in all the world, wherever God shall send his ministers, and to every creature; that is, to Gentiles as well as Jews, to sinners and to saints, and never to be withheld. God's ministers are not to shun to declare this glorious gospel on all suitable occasions, and as they preach, "Let him that hath an ear, hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." All who are born of God love this gospel, as far as they understand it, they rejoice in it; it is their meat and their drink; while on the other hand, all who hate God and love sin will as certainly hate his truth. Hence this gospel of the kingdom is a witness, discriminating between the quickened and the unregenerated sons of men. Those who can understand what the gospel in reality is will readily perceive that the thousands who in this day boast of their missionary spirit, and of their zeal in causing what they call the gospel to be preached throughout the world, would be among the very first, if they had the power, to stop the mouths of every minister of Jesus who faithfully proclaims the gospel to every creature. The gospel which Christ commissioned his apostles to preach in the power of God, through faith unto salvation to every one that believes. But the gospel which ungodly men admire, and which they are ever ready to embrace and support is, in its theory, the power of men, through works, means, and instrumentalities, unto what, in their delusions, they regard as salvation. Let us not mistake, as some have, and conclude the preaching is the power of God unto salvation. The preaching is one thing and the thing preached is quite another, and the excellency of this power is of God, and not of the preacher. Men may, and often do, hear gospel preaching, but they always remain strangers to the gospel until God applies its power to their hearts, unto salvation. But we must pass.

"*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*" Certainly not as a reward for believing or being baptized; for then would salvation be by works and conditional, which the scriptures quoted above fully prove to us in not the case; for if it be of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work; and if it be by grace, it is no more of works. It cannot be of both, for if of the one, then it Is not of the other, and we have proved beyond all successful contradiction that it is of grace, and equally positively that is not of works. That faith by which we believe the gospel of Christ is the gift of God, the fruit of the spirit, and Christ is himself both the author and the finisher of it. Hence we are told that "*As many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*" And Paul said to the Thessalonian saints, "*We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth.*" Baptism is indeed an act of the believer, in obedience of a divine command, which command is given only to believers. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." So said Philip to the Eunuch. As therefore we cannot possess saving faith until born of that spirit of which faith is the fruit, so neither can any man obey Christ in being baptized until he has become a regenerated person, a believer in Christ. The faith and obedience of the children of God are not the cause but the evidence and effects of their salvation. And thus they are given in the commission, as the essential marks or evidences by which all of Christ's commissioned apostles and ministers shall also recognize them as his saved people, and by which they shall also recognize each other. But what are they to believe? They are to believe the truth as it is in Jesus; for they who believe that which is not truth are deluded, and they to whom strong delusions are sent, as we are informed, believe a lie, that they all many be damned. To believe that we are able to save ourselves by our own works, or that there is salvation in an

anxious bench, or in anything short of the person, blood, and righteousness of God our Savior, is a delusion, and all who are suffered to live and die in that delusion shall be damned; for so the scriptures positively affirm. As these were the evidences of a regenerated state when the gospel commission was given, so they continue to be down to this day. We fairly infer therefore that none but Baptists, of the old apostolic school, or order, can exhibit the full and clear evidence that they are regenerated and born of God. Neither faith nor baptism is regeneration; but both are evidences of a regenerated state. He that believeth and is baptized is, of course, a baptized believer, and as in the mouth of two witnesses, under the ceremonial economy every word was required to be established, so now under the gospel dispensation a profession of faith alone, however satisfactory it may be as far as it goes, does not entitle a person to the privileges of the house of God. That faith, if genuine, must be expressed by obedience as well as by words; and when these two witnesses are presented, they are all that we have a right to ask by way of testimony that they who give them are of that people whom God has saved with an everlasting salvation. Where these evidences are given, and they who present them, continue to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God blamelessly, so long they are entitled to all the privileges of the church of God, and to the fellowship of all the saints.

Middletown, N.Y.,
March 1, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times
Republished: Volume 160, No. 11
November 1992

CONFLICTS IN THE CHURCH

On reading the admonitions contained in the communication published in this number from the pen of our esteemed brother E. Rittenhouse, a train of reflections have occupied our mind. Of the expediency of giving them wings, or sending them forth for the consideration of our brethren, we are not perfectly certain. But as we profess to hold no secrets on the things which pertain to, or concern, the church of the living God, we venture to expose some of them. And perhaps now, while the communication of brother Rittenhouse, whose equanimity is not so easily discomposed as that of some of us, will be under the consideration of our readers may be the most appropriate time for us to vent our views on the same subject. Although we wish not to detract from his views or to controvert them, we nevertheless feel disposed to present our own.

There may be divisions, disorders and offenses in some of our churches, of which we are not advised, notwithstanding our very widespread correspondence; and certainly our Lord has admonished us of the impossibility of their total absence, but he has added, Wo unto him by whom they come. In almost fifty years experience as a Baptist preacher, we have seldom if ever known a time in which no cases of trouble or division could be found in any churches of our connection; but we had flattered ourself that, considering the dire confusion of almost, if not quite every branch of anti-christ, and the unusually stormy aspect of the religious and political world, the Old School Baptist Church, throughout the States and territories of the American continent, are enjoying a greater degree of quietude and harmony than can be found in any other community on earth. It is not, however, to be denied nor can it be concealed, that in some localities there are painful trials in the churches, in which the ministers of

the gospel, if true and faithful to their charge, are necessarily involved more or less. We are now, according to the firm conviction of many of our most sagacious and far-seeing brethren, on the verge of the fulfillment of some important and interesting predictions recorded in divine revelation, in the fulfillment of which some of the most astounding events this lower world has ever witnessed are to be developed. Preparatory to which, Jerusalem seems now to be subjected to a searching as with lighted candles, and many hypocrites and nominal professors are being scourged from our ranks. The “Reed like unto a rod,” so appropriately referred to by our brother R., is being applied with astonishing effect; and all that is not really embodied in the temple of the living God, or in the altar, or found by actual measurement among his true worshipers is being passed over to the Gentiles, or to the uncircumcised.

Now we fully agree with our beloved brother that a factious party spirit should not be allowed to exist among the disciples of Christ; they are commanded to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, and to follow after the things which make for peace, and the things whereby one may edify another. But, let us not forget that the peace which is to be sought and cherished is that which comes to us from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. A perfect submission to the doctrine and government of Christ, as the Head over all things to his church, will secure a permanent and valid peace among all the members of his body. Any peace obtained by compromising or sacrificing a particle of the truth, or departure from any of the laws of Christ will prove as deceptive and worthless as that cried by the false prophets when there was no peace. “There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God. For the wicked are like the troubled sea, which continually casts up mire and dirt.” Better we judge that there be parties, and that discordant elements, if found in our churches, be

attracted to their appropriate centers, than that we work *wood, hay and stubble* into a building which is to be tried by a fiery ordeal.

We do not believe that our esteemed brother Rittenhouse would be less opposed than ourself to a peace that would require a sacrifice of truth and righteousness; but we were in fear that some of his remarks would be construed to censure some of our ministers for their uncompromising war upon error. As watchmen whom God has placed upon the walls of Jerusalem, they cannot too vigilantly watch the introduction of counterband doctrines or pernicious heresies which any may attempt to introduce into the church. Their charge is solenm; their responsibility is great. Let them beware!

Should an honest difference of opinion arise among brethren as to what is and what is not counterband, let the reed which is like unto a rod be applied, and let that which will not bear the strict measurement of the scriptures be at once given to the Gentiles.

A comparison of those ministers who have encountered trials and even divisions with those, if indeed any there be, who never have any trouble of the kind, may reflect as severely on those who do not as on those who do have trouble. Paul had considerable trouble at Antioch, at Galatian, and at Corinth, in battling disorder and error among the churches, but we do not read of as much with John and some other of the apostles. The writer of this article has held the pastoral care of churches forty-three years, and never has witnessed a division in the churches of his charge, or any parties formed in any of them, until within the last few months; but this long season of tranquillity has been ascribed to the goodness and grace of God, not to the peaceable proclivities of his disposition.

The Captain of our Salvation, in righteousness doth judge and make war, and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful; and at his command they fight the good fight, contend earnestly for the faith, and shall ultimately triumph through him.

But still, they shall not be crowned except they strive lawfully. No strife for the mastery, no outbursting of passion will bear the measurement of *the reed like unto a rod,* nor receive the approval of our King. We are commanded to "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple (Romans 16:17,18)." Now, it is of this kind of disturbers of the peace of Zion we understand our brother to speak. But great care should be taken lest in pulling up tares, we do not root up the wheat also; or when we censure the wrong, we do not implicate those who are right. Here the reed which is like unto a rod measures off to us the exact ground which we are to occupy in the warfare. Those who cause division, make or join parties, and occasion offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned under apostolic tuition, are to be avoided or given to the Gentiles; not retained in the temple, nor allowed at the altar. But those who observe this charge are by it required to *mark* and *avoid*the non-conformists. This, indeed, will make what is called parties; but the division will be such as will purge the church from unruly and vain-talkers and deceivers, and consolidate more closely those who conform to the measuring rod.

But while it is unquestionably true that in all former time, not excepting the days when the apostles were on the earth, those who have stood firmly on gospel ground and refused to countenance or wink at any departure from the faith and

order of the house of God, have been reproached and reviled as troublesome and pestilent fellows, tight-laced, contentious, bigoted and captious, it is also true that the opposite extreme has been reached by those who are of the Diotrephes school. Neither the ministers nor churches of Christ, nor any of the members of the churches, are permitted to yield any part of the doctrine or order of the gospel, even though it were to avoid divisions, reproaches, persecution, imprisonment, stripes, or death itself; but let it be remembered that the *spirit* as well as the letter of the law of Christ is indispensable, and no conformity to the letter of the word or rule, in the absence of the spirit and temper of the gospel, will be approved of God. Even the truth may be held in unrighteousness. The apostle exhorts us to "Speak the truth in love." Not that the heralds of truth are to love everything; for they should eschew evil, hate iniquity, and expose the hidden things of dishonesty. They are called to fight against error, and to contend earnestly for the faith; but this must be done in and under the influence of the love of God, the love of the truth, and the love of the saints. "In meekness instructing those who oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth: and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will."

Brother R. enquires, "Will not the ministration of the gospel, faithfully ministered in its own spirit, bring saints together and restore peace?" Such will undoubtedly be the tendency, and if all the parties involved are governed by the word and spirit of the gospel, there must be harmony. But it is a lamentable truth, that even Christians are not always under the benign influence of the spirit of the gospel; they are sometimes led by the flesh, and while so led may and do resist the faithful application of the word, even when it is ministered in its own spirit.

The importance of Christians or churches being governed by the word and spirit in all things, but more especially in all things pertaining to the order of the house of God, cannot be too highly appreciated. “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God.” It is a fearful thing to fall under the discipline of a gospel church. “God is in the midst of her.” The King Eternal sits enthroned in Zion, and it were better that any one of her members should have a mill-stone hanged about his neck, and he be cast into the midst of the sea than that such an one should fall under the discipline of the church of God.

“The Son of David holds his throne,
And sits in judgment there.”

We agree with what we understand brother Rittenhouse to mean, that a wholesale exclusion of members, when the laws of Christ and the spirit of the gospel do not direct such expulsion, is an outrage on the order of the church of God, and such exclusions are not valid. But such exclusions seldom, if ever, occur in the church of Christ, however frequent they may occur in communities claiming the name. But, unless our own observation has been at fault, we have witnessed the opposite extreme run into by a class of members who have seemed almost totally indifferent in regard to the authority of Christ in his church. Such have seemed never to have recognized the church as the Judgment Seat of Christ, or as holding any authority to sit in judgment over them. They seem to regard their membership only as a matter of convenience, to be repudiated whenever their inclination is crossed. We have been greatly pained to witness instances, especially during the last few years, in which members have regarded their allegiance to human governments much more sacred than their obligation to be in subjection to the laws of Christ, which govern the church. They will brand as a traitor, and consign to the gallows, one

whom they denounce as disloyal to a human government and a seceder from a humanly organized compact, and yet bid defiance to the kingdom of Christ, in the execution of the laws of the King of Glory. In our understanding of this subject, when any, whether few or many, defy the authority of the church, refuse submission to the laws of Christ, and assume a defiant attitude to the church, that church ceases to bear the peculiar marks of a church of God if she fails to withdraw her fellowship from them. Let it not be said to such that their exclusion is not valid. What is bound on earth by the laws of Christ, as expounded to the church by the enthroned apostles, is also bound in heaven. We hold that the laws of men, so far as they do not conflict with the laws of Christ, are binding upon all who live under them; but the laws of Christ, who is the "Only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," are of infinitely higher importance. He that despised even "Moses' law, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses. Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant, whereby he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done dispite to the spirit of grace?"

The solemn warning of the apostle Peter, in his second Epistle and second chapter, should be carefully read by those who may regard it as a small matter to forfeit the fellowship of the church of God; or a light thing to "despise government," and speak evil of dignitaries, being self-willed. Such as have "forsaken the right way, and have gone astray following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness (II Peter 2:15)." "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in

bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire (II Peter 2:18-22).”

Churches standing on apostolic ground are not responsible for the apostasy of those who leave her communion, disregard their order, or defy their authority. Better for all such to go out than that one particle of the laws and ordinances of the house of God should be violated. If the grace of God in their hearts, and the love of the truth as it is in Jesus, have not sufficient attraction to keep them within the gates of Zion, no unscriptural inducements should be employed. Being duly warned and admonished by the church, if still defiant and incorrigible, the law of Christ demands that they should be put away.

Nor are the ministers of Christ to be held responsible for the existence of divisions, disorders, or parties, provided he has faithfully ministered the word in its letter and in its spirit; for the faithful ministration of the word is designed to discriminate between truth and error, between the precious and the vile, between those who love and fear the Lord, and those who love and fear him not.

If a church becomes corrupted so that the faithful labors of her pastor are unavailing, he may be justified in going where his ministry promises to be more useful. Or if, in the honest judgment of a church, a pastor’s gifts have ceased to edify the church, or if his continuance is the cause of the

disturbance, and his removal would secure a better state of harmony and gospel order, it is clearly expedient that he should go to some other field of labor. Indeed, we have been solemnly impressed that there are many excellent and able ministers, whose itinerant labors have been greatly blessed to the edification and comfort of the saints, who seem totally destitute of pastoral gifts. Comparatively few of the primitive ministers of Christ were settled pastors or bishops.

But we cannot regard it as a mark of a good minister of Christ if, when the pastor sees the wolf coming, he shall leave the flock exposed to his ravages and flee away. May the God of our salvation give us wisdom and prudence in applying the “reed which is like unto a rod,” that in ruling out of the temple that which is given to the Gentiles, we reject not that which the rule approves, nor retain that which it condemns; and “see that ye hurt not the oil and the wine.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 322 - 328

CONGREGATIONAL SINGING.

THE editor of the *Baptist Record*, in remarking upon an article from another paper upon this subject, holds the following language, viz:

"This point has for some time been decided in our minds – the music from a scientific choir, is not any part of congregational worship. Let us have good singing in our churches, but let us have that kind of singing, in which all the congregation can "join with sweet accord, in hymns around the throne." What would Paul and Silas think of the music in some of our churches at the present day?"

"It would be well for some churches to consider seriously the many objections that are urged against their choirs. They are such independent things, that there is no governing them."

There are some other practices very common in the New School churches, to which we will call the attention of our friend Jewell. If he thinks that Paul and Silas would be surprised to find modern religionists worshiping with fiddles, and choirs of hired infidels, organs, and other machinery, what does he think would be their astonishment at witnessing the *railroad*improvements which have been made in preaching, in. dispensing with the offence of the cross, in accommodating the doctrine, the manner, and delivery, to the taste and desire of the fashionable, polite, and wealthy of the world? What credit would they be constrained to award the "President and Directors, & Co.," of the colleges and theological seminaries, for getting out such swarms of lilly-fingered orators for our velvet cushioned pulpits? And praying too; should Paul and Silas, who, in their day, knew not how to pray as they ought, but had to depend on the Spirit to help their infirmities, govern their desires, and direct their affections, when they come to hear our modern scientific

clergy say or read their prayers to the gods of missions, of Sabbath schools, and of other modern religious inventions; prayers performed by quantity in the latest fashion and most popular style, the value of which to be estimated in dollars and cents? What would be their opinion of baptism performed in tubs and cisterns, in the basement of the meeting house, with apparatus to warm the water in cold weather? Of the substitution of cold water for wine in the administration of the Lord's Supper Of religious fairs,with their apparatus of wheels of fortune, sham post offices for the sale of love letters, lottery, and other pious gambling, in aid of the Lord's treasury? Or should these two Old School Baptists, after coming out from the inner prison where their feet had been made fast in the stocks, be ushered into a Baptist Religious tea party, to regale themselves on ice creams, hot oysters, prize poundcakes, and sweetened water, in contrasting the present with the past would they not involuntarily exclaim, "*O tempora, O mores?*"

New Vernon, N.Y.,
July 1, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 456 – 458

CONTROVERSY

There is truly a diversity of opinion among brethren on the subject of **religious controversy.** Some of our brethren have expressed a great aversion to the discussion of important and deep subjects, on which our corespondents do not fully agree, while others profess to be greatly edified and comforted by hearing and comparing the conflicting views of those who differ on such disputed points. Under such circumstances, what course should we, as the editor of this paper, take? A venerable and dear brother writes us from Warwick, N.Y. that our readers in his vicinity are tired of the discussion on **Justification;** another brother writes from Troy, N.Y. that he is pleased with the idea of discussion through the **Signs,**when such discussion is conducted in the spirit of the gospel, with a desire to instruct. A third published a pamphlet in Maryland in opposition to our views on Justification, and says he is **no sectarian,** and hints that until the Old School Baptists can see eye to eye in every particular, that he judges it an unauspicious time for uniting with us. Again we ask, what course should we pursue? It is our desire (as far as we can do so without sacrificing truth) to please all our brethren; but we have a still greater desire to edify, instruct, comfort and build up the sheep and lambs of our Heavenly Father's flock.

From a conviction in our own mind that well written discussions, in a spirit of kindness, on various subjects, will contribute to the interest and usefulness of the **Signs,** we have concluded to ask the indulgence of such of our brethren as do not see with us the propriety of such a course, while we will promise, on our part, to reject all such communications on controverted points as are written in an all-natured or unbecoming spirit or style. Why should we be afraid to discuss what we hold to be the truth? Nothing but

error can suffer from investigation; the more closely the truth is scrutinized, the more brilliantly it will shine.

On the discussion of the subject of Justification, much has been written, and of that **much, some** has not been in that brotherly edifying manner that we could wish; but we conceive that more remains to be said, and more can be said to great advantage on the subject. We are persuaded that very little difference would remain among our Old School Brethren, could they understand each other, and each feel willing to yield to the word and testimony of Holy Writ. The communication of brother Goldsmith, in this number, appears to us to be written in a proper tone; we therefore cheerfully admit it. Let those who wish to reply to him, or otherwise to shew their opinion, avoid harsh expressions, and manifest at once in their writings their love for the truth, and their desire that all the purchased possession of Christ may know and be set free by the truth. Remember we are brethren.

Alexandria, D.C.
January 15, 1839

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times
Republished - Volume 151, No. 5 - May 1983

CONTROVERSY ON JUSTIFICATION.

While we wish for a free discussion of every subject of general importance to the household of faith, we regret that our brethren differ so widely on a subject on which they are so well agreed. Unfortunately some of our correspondents either do not understand themselves, or they do not understand each other. Some of our brethren have labored, in this discussion, to establish the doctrine of the eternity of the counsel or purpose of Jehovah, the doctrine of predestination, the eternity of the love of God, and of the election of grace. All this is quite irrelevant, inasmuch as these sentiments have not been assailed, but are alike dear and sacred with all parties concerned in the discussion.

Apprehensive that we have not yet been fully understood on the subject of justification, we will here give a brief statement of our views on this subject in language so plain, if possible, as to prevent any who are not willfully blind from accusing us of Arminianism or Unitarianism.

First. We hold and believe that the people of God are the church of God, and mystical body of Christ, and in this relation to him they had a vital existence in Christ, as their divine and spiritual Head, and Mediatorial representative, from the ancients of eternity.

Second. Existing as they did in Christ, they were recognized as the bone of his bones, and the flesh of his flesh, a part of himself, one with Christ as Christ is one with the Father; in this complete identity with their glorious Read, the body, which comprised all the election of grace, (not as being elected into, but created in him,) were loved with the same love, precisely the same in quality, quantity, date and

duration. Also, as thus identified with Christ, were interested in and participants of his inherent and eternal perfections, which needed no law righteousness, of obedience or sacrifice, nor any act whatever, for justification.

Third. That the term *justification,* as used in the scriptures, in no case has reference to that perfection described in the foregoing paragraph, but is invariably used in a forensic or law sense, and in every instance on record, where the word is used at all, it refers directly and exclusively to that justification which legally, honorably, effectually and forever acquits and clears the people of God from actual sin, guilt and transgression. Now seeing that justification is that by which we are delivered from the demands and penalty of the law which had cursed us as guilty sinners, can any suppose that we were delivered before we were involved, washed in his blood before we were defiled, or his blood was shed? Is it not far more becoming and consistent for us to believe what God has revealed on this subject? He has informed us that "by his stripes we are healed," and that "by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified," that he was delivered for our offences, and raised for our justification; and lest we should still mistake the doctrine, Paul has given us a very lucid illustration of the doctrine in the fourth and fifth chapters of Romans. Hear him. "As by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one (Christ) the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Christ) shall many be made righteous." To be made righteous, in the sense of the above scripture, could not possibly mean what had already been done eternally, but a work requiring that actual obedience, and that *even unto death,* should be rendered to the same law that condemned us, in the first Adam, by Christ as the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. How Adam could prefigure Christ, as

declared in the above texts, and how all the sacrificial offerings under the law, could be typical of a work actually performed eternal ages before the former was created or the latter were presented, we are not able to conceive.

Fourth. Everything is, and eternally was, naked and open to the eye of God. He saw from everlasting the whole history of his people, and in his all-wise decree provided, prepared and ordained every link of the adorable chain of salvation, not leaving the smallest particle in the work of redemption, calling, justification, or of the ultimate glorification of his people, to be determined by the will or works of angels, men or devils. All was ordained, and God has even declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." But the execution of what he had purposed, in regard to the deliverance of lost sinners from guilt, condemnation and death - their final and everlasting justification through his blood, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, was securely ordained in the hands of a Mediator, to be duly executed in due time.

If to believe the above doctrine constitutes us unsound in the faith of the gospel, in the estimation of brethren whose opinions we highly regard, we deeply regret that such should be the case.

In this number will be found the communications of our esteemed brethren, Marven and Poteet, in defence of eternal justification. It was not our intention to attempt a review of them at this time; but we will however venture a few remarks.

It is, to us at least, somewhat remarkable that no two who have written against our views appear to be agreed among

themselves. Brother Marven objects to What he denominates a *time justification,* and so do we. That purpose of grace which was established in eternity, and executed through the obedience and death of Christ in the flesh, by the which he has canceled the demands of the law, put away our sins, and blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, in our estimation deserves a much better name; for by it "he has perfected *forever* all them that are sanctified; it being provided for and secured before all time, and being in duration everlasting, although based on what our Lord performed and suffered in time, is entitled to all that consideration given to it in the scriptures of truth.

In reply to brother Marven's queries, we say:

1. All the Old Testament saints have gone to heaven.

2. On brother Marven's position that they are eternally just and pure, they could need no washing, and they who were never imperfect could need no pardon; why wash that which is already whiter than snow? And why pardon those who were never guilty, seeing our Lord has informed us that *just men need no repentance?* But according to our view, we can with propriety answer that all the elect of God, from Abel to the end of time, were washed and made clean in that blood which Christ shed on Calvary; for we see no more difficulty in its application, to the removing of the guilt of God's people before, than to those after the death of Christ. Our brother M. will understand us to say, we believe that all the Old Testament saints went home to glory, being washed, pardoned, and freely justified, through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ; even before that blood was actually shed. As to brother Marven's view of the atonement, looking back as well as forward, we have published the same idea on that point.

3. To his third question, we answer affirmatively. They had that righteousness by faith, and on that righteousness they all went home to glory.

Brother Poteet takes different ground. Brother Marven, if we understand him, makes eternal justification proceed from eternal love; but brother Poteet makes eternal love proceed from eternal justification; for he cannot conceive how God could love his people unless they were justified. According to brother P., the saints never were concluded in sin, sin never was charged on, or imputed to them; every mouth has not been stopped, nor the whole world become guilty before God; as he explains eternity, very justly, to be without beginning or end; the saints had no sin prior to eternity, nor can they have any after eternity expires, as it cannot expire, and throughout its duration he has then completely justified. Hence, if the position can be established, Christ did not die for the elect; for he came not to gain the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If brother Poteet is one of those happy beings who was never sinful, polluted, vile, and justly condemned by the holy law, he has decidedly the advantage of us. We were conceived in sin, and our only hope is that, while we were yet sinners, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly, and that God for the great love wherewith be loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together with Christ, &c.

We agree with brother Poteet that all spiritual blessings were embraced in the grace given us in Christ before the world was, including election, calling, regeneration, justification, perseverence, and final glory, but shall we therefore say that our brother Thomas Poteet, whom we love, dearly love in the Lord, was eternally regenerated, because we believe that blessing was secured to him in the purpose and grace of God, before the world began? Surely not.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
October 5, 1838.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 452 – 457

CONVERTS, CROWS AND MONEY.

THE following scrap, cut from some other paper, was sent us for insertion in the "Signs of the Times;" we give it room not because of its singularity; for it is in good keeping with all the New School movements of the day; but to show that some other periodicals are beginning to notice some of the popish humbugs of the times.

"Let those laugh now who never laughed before,
And those who've always laughed now laugh the more.

"In the *Christian Watchman* of December 28, an account is given of a meeting of the 'Young Men's Methodist Foreign Missionary Society,' at which meeting one of the speakers is represented as holding the following language:

"By the report of last year, it seems that $62,000 had been spent; and the result of this amount was the conversion of 3,523 souls: - thus 3,523 souls were converted by the payment of only *nine and a half cents apiece!* may thus calculate, he said, that this number will be converted by the payment of this small sum."

Nine and a half cents a head! Cheap as dirt, and only a cent and a half less than the bounty offered in Maine for crows' heads! What commission do the 'Young Men' pay the converts? - z."

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
May 1, 1839.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 500 – 501

THE CORNER, NAIL, THE BATTLE BOW AND EVERY OPPRESSOR.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: – Please give your views on Zech. x. 4: "Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together." I do not recollect of ever having heard any of the brethren preach from this text, and would be glad to have your views upon it, if agreeable to your feelings to give them, and oblige.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,
JNO. R. MARTIN.
Franklin Co., Va., April 4, 1881.

REPLY. – It would afford us great pleasure to comply with the request of our highly esteemed brother, if we were sure that anything we can say would clearly explain the meaning of the Spirit in the use of the figurative expressions employed in the text. There is danger of running into vain and imaginary speculations when we attempt to elucidate some of the dark metaphors which the Holy Spirit has employed in the scriptures of divine truth. The parables and dark sayings of our God are evidently designed to teach us our dependence on him to reveal to us the hidden treasure which they conceal from the wise and prudent of mankind, that we may the more fully realize our dependence on him to open the scriptures to our understanding.

The prophet Zechariah was contemporary with Ezra, Nehemiah, Joshua, Zerubbabel and others who prophesied the deliverance of Israel from her seventy years captivity in Babylon, their return to Jerusalem, and restoration of their

city and rebuilding of their temple, in all of which the spirit of prophecy evidently pointed to the coming of the Messiah and the setting up of the Redeemer's kingdom under the gospel dispensation. In the chapter preceding the one in which our text is found the cheering prediction is proclaimed in these words: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." This prediction is applied directly to the coming of Christ. – Matt. xxi. 1-11, and John xi. 15. At the time when the prediction should be fulfilled, the Lord by the prophet adds, "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." All this seems to look forward to the breaking up of the old Jewish dispensation, the breaking down of the wall of partition which had separated the Jews and Gentiles. The time indicated by the Lord in these words: "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south."

The whole connection of this prophecy seems to present under many metaphors, first, the literal purging of Judah from her idol shepherds and abominations, and the cutting off from Ephraim and Jerusalem the horse and chariot, battle bow, and all the idolatrous defenses in which they had trusted, drive out all their oppressors, and to restore them their city, temple and privileges, and in doing this figuratively set forth the redemption of his spiritual or anti-typical Jerusalem from her captivity and bondage.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 10.
May 15, 1881.

At the heading of the “Editorial” section it said this: “THE LAST EDITORIAL WRITTEN BY ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.”

At the closing of this editorial it had this to say: “Here the pen that for nearly fifty years had not wearied in its labors of consolation, admonition and instruction, was laid down never to again be taken up in its editorial labors. “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” And may he enable us to be still and know that he is God.

THE CORNER, NAIL, THE BATTLE BOW AND EVERY OPPRESSOR.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: – Please give your views on Zech. x. 4: "Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle bow, out of him every oppressor together." I do not recollect of ever having heard any of the brethren preach from this text, and would be glad to have your views upon it, if agreeable to your feelings to give them, and oblige.

Your unworthy brother in gospel bonds,
JNO. R. MARTIN.
Franklin Co., Va., April 4, 1881.

REPLY. – It would afford us great pleasure to comply with the request of our highly esteemed brother, if we were sure that anything we can say would clearly explain the meaning of the Spirit in the use of the figurative expressions employed in the text. There is danger of running into vain and imaginary speculations when we attempt to elucidate some of the dark metaphors which the Holy Spirit has employed in the scriptures of divine truth. The parables and dark sayings of our God are evidently designed to teach us our dependence on him to reveal to us the hidden treasure which they conceal from the wise and prudent of mankind, that we may the more fully realize our dependence on him to open the scriptures to our understanding.

The prophet Zechariah was contemporary with Ezra, Nehemiah, Joshua, Zerubbabel and others who prophesied the deliverance of Israel from her seventy years captivity in Babylon, their return to Jerusalem, and restoration of their

city and rebuilding of their temple, in all of which the spirit of prophecy evidently pointed to the coming of the Messiah and the setting up of the Redeemer's kingdom under the gospel dispensation. In the chapter preceding the one in which our text is found the cheering prediction is proclaimed in these words: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." This prediction is applied directly to the coming of Christ. – Matt. xxi. 1-11, and John xi. 15. At the time when the prediction should be fulfilled, the Lord by the prophet adds, "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." All this seems to look forward to the breaking up of the old Jewish dispensation, the breaking down of the wall of partition which had separated the Jews and Gentiles. The time indicated by the Lord in these words: "When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as the sword of a mighty man. And the Lord shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south."

The whole connection of this prophecy seems to present under many metaphors, first, the literal purging of Judah from her idol shepherds and abominations, and the cutting off from Ephraim and Jerusalem the horse and chariot, battle bow, and all the idolatrous defenses in which they had trusted, drive out all their oppressors, and to restore them their city, temple and privileges, and in doing this figuratively set forth the redemption of his spiritual or anti-typical Jerusalem from her captivity and bondage.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 10.
May 15, 1881.

At the heading of the “Editorial” section it said this: “THE LAST EDITORIAL WRITTEN BY ELDER GILBERT BEEBE.”

At the closing of this editorial it had this to say: “Here the pen that for nearly fifty years had not wearied in its labors of consolation, admonition and instruction, was laid down never to again be taken up in its editorial labors. “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” And may he enable us to be still and know that he is God.

CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

IN this paper will be found a letter from brother Conrad, of Kentucky, dissenting from some part of our reply to brother Buckley, of Alabama. We are sorry that our remarks have been understood as involving a reflection upon any of our churches or brethren, as nothing could have been more foreign to our intention. So far as we are prepared to answer the first interrogatory of brother Conrad, we believe the practice of writing a brief summary of the faith held, is very general among the Old School Baptist churches, but a practice by no means peculiar to them, but equally common among the New School, and nearly all orders of professed christians; but the practice we believe is not universal among the churches of our faith. It was not our design to denounce the practice, or find fault with the brethren who think them necessary, nor even to insinuate that such brethren as adopt them thereby reject the New Testament as a rule of faith and practice, or think that look insufficient (when duly understood) to thoroughly furnish them to every good work. So far from entertaining such an opinion of our brethren, or of any of them, we are satisfied that their motives are to guard against innovations, heresies, disunion and confusion. In coming together in church fellowship, nothing can be of more importance than harmony; two cannot consistently walk together if they be not agreed. One Lord, one faith and one baptism must be acknowledged, received, professed and practiced, to distinguish the church of Christ from the various branches of anti-christ. The fellowship of the saints also rests on the same basis as at the day of pentecost, when “they that gladly received the word were baptized, and they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” - Acts ii. 42. We are aware that many designing men, in order to lead the saints into some new theory, and away from the simplicity of the

gospel, have commenced their work by denouncing creeds, confessions, &c., and have professed great attachment for the bible as an infallible rule; and others again, to bring about an unlawful amalgamation of the saints with the children of the bond-woman, have taught that a particular set of views are of little or no importance, and consequently all discriminating confessions should be laid aside. To protect the saints from confusion and disorder therefore, our brethren have in most instances, at the organization of churches, prepared and adopted a written declaration of what they understood to be the doctrine and order of the gospel, as taught in the scriptures.

But brother Conrad will inquire why "we, for ourself, are getting more and more out of favor with written creeds, confessions of faith," &c.? In answer, we respectfully submit The following reasons, viz.:

First. The Old School Baptists are coming to be much less in need of written creeds to distinguish them than formerly, by their conformity to the New Testament as their only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice; while every other sect and denomination are departing further and further from even the form of sound words. The time has been when the several branches of anti-christ professed as strict a regard for the scriptures as a rule of faith as the Baptists did; while at the same time they construed the language of the divine record to mean the very opposite of what we were taught by the Spirit to understand; but the time has now come in which they publicly disavow such regard for the bible as a rule, and take the ground that the scriptures were only designed as a general outline of what God requires, and that the ingenuity of man is to be taxed to fill up the blank, by co-working with God, in contriving ways and providing means for the more effectual execution of the divine will and salvation of sinners, and that many things, for which there is neither example or

precept in the bible, are of more importance in the work of saving sinners than any thing which the bible contains. Hence a strict adherance to the New Testament is at this time a more prominent and distinctive badge of our peculiar faith, than all the written creeds and confessions that were ever written by uninspired men could possibly be.

Second. Our next reason is, that whatever written creeds have effected in preventing innovations and confusion in our churches, they cease to be effectual at present. A vast number of the New School churches of our acquaintance have as sound and unexceptionable articles of faith as ally we have ever found written among the Old Fashioned Baptists; and yet run as greedily after the error of Balaam as any of the arminians of the present age; so that the very creeds which were designed to preserve the church from a connection with heresies and heretics are used for the opposite purpose, and churches which have gone quite over into New Schoolism are retained in our associations, because they still retain the written confession of faith in their church book, and annually preface their associational letters with a copy of their original confession, thus rendering themselves perfectly invincible by fortifying themselves with the same confession of faith which we also hold.

Third. We are more and more convinced by our own observation that there is no valuable object secured by the use of written creeds, which is not equally secured to every gospel church by a direct reference to the word of God. Is it said, “But we differ in our construction of the word of God?” The same may be said of creeds; the truth is, those who would cavil with the scriptures would cavil with the best creed that was ever written by uninspired man.

Fourth. There is a very great discrepancy in the written confessions in use among those who are perfectly agreed in

their understanding of the scriptures. It has not been uncommon in some of our association where the churches were in the most perfect apparent harmony and fellowship, to find in their different versions of the leading sentiments laid down in the preface of their letters an entire want of harmony. We have something like a bushel of such documents which have been sent us for publication at sundry times and from divers places; were they all spread out in the columns of the SIGNS, they would do for more to confuse and obscure the real sentiments of Old School Baptists than to elucidate and make them plain.

Fifth. Without imputing anything improper to brethren, churches and associations, the writing of a creed to be made binding as a standard of faith, does seem to us to imply what none of our Old School brethren wish or *dare* to say, viz.: That the New Testament is not a complete and sufficient rule of faith and practice to the saints of God. If complete, it cannot be improved; if sufficient, nothing more is required.

Sixth. The practice of adopting creeds written by uninspired men, did not originate with the church of God; nor is the practice authorized upon any express or implied command of God, or example of the primitive church. Nothing was required to identify the primitive church more than their strict observance of all things whatsoever Christ had commanded. A confession and profession of faith was required to be made verbally by every person on application for fellowship and membership in the church; on such profession they were received and baptized, and as long as they held fast this profession of their faith by walking conformably to the gospel, they enjoyed the apostles' fellowship. And it is our honest impression, that the best confession of faith that can be adopted at this time, should be much more plainly written than with ink and paper; there is a way of showing our faith by our works, by our

attachment to the cause, our submission to the government of Jesus, our love to the brethren, our close conformity in word and doctrine, and in faith and practice to the New Testament, more effectual than all the written parchments dictated by councils of good or bad men since the apostolic age of the church.

"So let our lips and lives express
The holy gospel we profess;
So let our works and virtues shine,
To prove the doctrine all divine.
Thus shall we best proclaim abroad
The honor of our sovereign God."

A written creed may be carried in our pockets, while our hearts are far from righteousness; but the faith of God's elect must exist in the heart, exercising its governing power over those whose happy privilege it is to possess it.

We cannot agree with our correspondent in his application of Romans i. 31, for we have no idea that the characters there described were ever guilty of breaking any covenant entered into by or obligatory upon the members of a gospel church; the violation of any contract is a species of covenant breaking, and as it is required of every one, in uniting with an Old, School Baptist church, to promise conformity to the New Testament, as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, any departure from. that rule, even by substitution of other rules, is so far covenant breaking, and any departure from the scriptures as a rule is so considered, and so treated by our Old School churches, when satisfied that such is the case, whether the thing in which the offending party has offended be named in a set of articles or not.

The confusion alluded to in the church at Corinth, (1 Cor. xiv. 26) was not to be prevented by written confessions, but by a

strict observance of the directions which the Holy Ghost gave them by this inspired admonition of the apostle; otherwise, when they came together each might have a creed, each a confession and each a summary of faith, which might possibly differ is widely as the psalms, doctrines, tongues, revelations and interpretations of which Paul complained. This admonition goes rather to show the necessity of keeping everything out of the church that is not plainly authorized, than to show the necessity of additional psalms, doctrines and interpretations. Written confessions, as defined by brother Conrad, are written interpretations of the word, and show the peculiar doctrine embraced in the confession. Let each come together with his written creed, and what would they lack of the confusion which existed among the Corinthians?

Our brother inquires, if we were called to assist in the organization of a church, and we should find the constituents destitute of a written summary, whether we could report them perfectly joined together in the same mind, judgment, &c.? If we should find them perfectly joined in all things contained in the New Testament, we could. But, in our judgment, they might have a set of very clear articles of faith, and each sign his name and pledge himself to abide by them for ever; and still in our estimation lack that perfect unanimity which we consider essential to the fellowship of the gospel. We would not measure them by their written creeds, but by the measuring reed with which John was commanded to measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein; (Rev. xi. 1) and if we should find the city four square, having twelve foundations and twelve gates, and in all things agreeing with the measurement of the reed, we would not dare pronounce her deficient because she had no written creed other than the bible.

Brother Conrad entirely mistook our use of the words, “But who shall dare to say that the New Testament is not a sufficient standard of faith and practice?” in his inference that we designed to charge our brethren with denying the sufficiency of the New Testament as a rule. The church in which we hold our membership, and both churches to which we statedly preach, have written summaries of their faith, and we believe that it would be hard to find any churches in our country who more firmly believe that the New Testament is an infallible, complete and sufficient rule of faith and practice. So that according to his construction of our words, the charge would have fallen heavier upon our own head than on his or any of those brethren who held written confessions, without regarding them in the light in which he understood us to regard them.

It is true we do not regard the Old Testament as a rule of faith and practice to the gospel church, or our faith would still be looking for a Savior to come, and still we should practice the service of the worldly sanctuary, and perform the carnal ordinances of the old dispensation. With this distinction brother Conrad is not only with us, but has carried out his views in clearer language, in “declaring that the scriptures are the only proper rule of faith and practice, and in his profession of faith he only makes a declaration briefly of what he understands to be contained in the New Testament.” In this, if we understand our brother, we are perfectly agreed. We not only hold that it is lawful for the disciples of Jesus to declare frankly what they understand the scriptures to teach, but that it is their duty to do so; and this we intended to express in the words which he quoted from us, viz: “Brethren cannot too well understand each other in regard to their faith and practice.” Certainly such declaration does not require them to disown the New Testament as their only rule.

The want of harmony which brother Conrad inferred, between our remarks, and much of our published writings, and our practice, and above all, in what he understood to be an implied rejection of our brethren and their sentiments, is altogether owing to his understanding us differently from what we designed to express. If there is any implied discrepance between our doctrinal views and those of our brethren in Kentucky, and other places, we are not aware of it; and certainly our brethren abroad have had abundant opportunity to know of our doctrine and practice for the last twelve years.

In regard to Christ's having quoted from the Old Testament, and Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, writing, &c., brother Conrad will not say that these were like the saints of the present day, uninspired men; nor do we believe our brother would be willing to give modern written opinions, even of the best of men, an equality with what was written by immediate inspiration of God.

Brother Conrad says all that we write or preach is our creed, and confession of faith, &c. Very true; but not in the common acceptation of these terms; in this qualified sense of creeds and confessions, we not only admit the propriety of them, but we consider it the bounden duty of all the children of God, as opportunity is offered, to declare verbally, or in writing, what God has taught them, and thus contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Perhaps we have written sufficiently upon this subject for the present, and we sincerely hope that our explanation may be satisfactory to brother Conrad, and to all others who have been hurt with us. We certainly did not intend to start any new game for controversy. When we wrote to brother Buckley we wrote as we believed, and called on our brethren to examine the subject for themselves, and not trust to our

views. Brother C. has complied with our request; he has written frankly, and we think in the spirit and temper of the gospel, and we hope that all that has been written by us both, may serve to edify, and at least lead our brethren to inquire at the holy oracle.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.
July 15, 1844.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 459-467

CRIME INCREASING IN A RATIO WITH THE RAILROAD IMPROVEMENTS IN RELIGION.

IN publishing a statistical account of accidents, incendiaries, murders, &c., from January to July, the United States Gazette, of Philadelphia, gives six hundred and twenty-eight houses and stores burnt with a part of their contents, estimated at three million dollars. And two hundred and fifteen murders, by guns, pistols, bowie knives, &c.

May we not challenge a parallel for this amount of crime in the same space, at any period of our history previous to the organization of anti-scriptural institution for the evangelization of the world?

New Vernon, N.Y.,
August 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Page 331

THE “CROSS AND JOURNAL” IN GRIEF.

“I am very unhappy to inform you that I feel under the necessity of requesting a discontinuance of the *Cross and Journal.* First, I do not find that form of doctrine that the apostles taught; and secondly, I conclude this form of doctrine, and the practice of missionary societies and kindred institutions, are without the least precept whatever. The more I read your paper the more I detest this new-fangled system that is teaching for doctrine the commandments of men.”

“The truth does not always have its legitimate effects. While the gospel subdues many to penitence and love, it hardens others. “The clay hardens and the wax, melts before one and the same fire.” - *[Cross and Journal.]*

REMARKS.

VERY true, the truth does not always have its legitimate effect. This is abundantly exemplified in the case of the *Cross and Journal;* for had the truth which has been lavished so abundantly on the conductors of that paper been attended in them with the fear of the Lord, they would not at this time have needed the reproof which they have copied from one of their old patrons into their columns. Why, if able, does not the editor of that paper inform his correspondent in what part of the bible he may find a precept or example for those institutions?

Alas! it is much easier to put such troublesome corespondents off by assuming an air of pity for their

ignorance, stupidity, or hardness of heart, than to find scripture to satisfy’ the bible man that the doctrine, practice and modern institutions advocated by that print are of God, so long as it is written that, “The legs of the lame are not equal.”

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
April 1,1836.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 223 – 224

CROSSING JORDAN

Brother Beebe: - If it be not asking too much, please give your views, through the *Signs of the Times,* on the figurative import of Jordan, or rather of the children of Israel crossing that river. What I desire to know is whether it was designed to represent death. Your reply will greatly oblige one of the least of all saints, if a saint at all.

Elizabeth Conkle

REPLY: We do not think the crossing of Jordan by the children of Israel was designed to represent the departure of the children of God from this mortal to their immortal state, or from earth to heaven. When Christians leave these mortal shores they will bid farewell to all sinning, sorrowing, trouble and perplexity, and enter that haven of rest, peace and security, where the wicked shall cease to trouble them, and the weary shall be at rest. But such was not the case with the Hebrews when they passed over Jordan; their conflicts immediately commenced with the Canaanites, who disputed every inch of the ground with them. Nations were to be subdued and driven out before they could enjoy peace and quietude. And indeed, as long as they were to remain in that land they were told that the Canaanites should continue to be within their walls as an annoyance to them.

It is true that poets and commentators have frequently used the figure to represent the death of believers, probably because it was the end of the journey of the redeemed Israelites in the wilderness, and it was spoken of in distinction from Egypt and the wilderness of Mount Sinai, as a place of rest - a land flowing with milk and honey, and an inheritance given them in their father Abraham before any of them were born. But all these considerations cannot justify the application of Jordan to death, and Canaan to heaven so

long as we find that Jordan did not terminate the conflicts, nor Canaan realize to them uninterrupted enjoyment. In Canaan, as well as in the wilderness, they were beset with temptations and invaded by enemies, and subjects of frequent and fearful chastisements from the hand of the Lord. This none of us look for in that world of unfading glory where the saints shall be perfectly conformed to the image of their dear Redeemer, and forevermore employed in singing praise to God and the Lamb.

While dissenting from the views of others, it will be expected of us to give our views on the true application of the figure. The Hebrews in all their history we have regarded as a figure of the spiritual people of God. They were created and chosen in Abraham before any of them were brought into manifestation. As his seed, according to the flesh, they were figurative of a seed which was created in Christ, and identified with him in the economy of grace as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a peculiar people, that should be counted to him for a generation. Abraham’s seed were after the flesh, and were the type. Christ’s seed were not after the flesh, but after the Spirit, and they were the anti-type. This is no vain speculation, for the inspired apostle Paul has thus applied the figure, “If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” The condition of the Hebrews in their early history, and in their captivity, and bondage in Egypt may represent the state and condition of God’s chosen people in their fallen state of depravity, in bondage, and sold under sin. The redemption of the Israelites from the house of bondage when the Pascal Lamb was slain for them points clearly to the redemption of the children of God when Christ, our Passover, was slain. The toilsome pilgrimage of Israel in the wilderness where they received the fiery law not only shows that the law and the prophets were until John, or the Savior’s advent, and the people of God were held under the Sinai Covenant until the

baptism of John commenced in Jordan, but it also shows that the seed of Christ, whom he hath redeemed with his own blood, are in due time quickened and in their experience have to linger through a tedious and toilsome meandering in the wilderness of the law, and that when they emerge from their legal toils and wanderings in the wilderness, when Christ is revealed to them as their Spiritual Joshua, to lead them through Jordan into the promised possession, they then come to the anti-type of Jordan, which we understand to be the gospel ordinance of christian baptism. This ordinance divides between the wilderness state of God's people and their gospel church privileges, and the quickened child of grace, experimentally delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, enters the anti-type of Canaan the moment he is baptized, according to the law of Christ. In the gospel church we find the land flowing with milk and honey, and this is our spiritual inheritance secured to us in our Lord Jesus Christ, as the inheritance of Canaan was to Israel in Abraham. But in the gospel dispensation the spiritual Israelites have to encounter the Canaanites who oppose the whole ground with us. Like them, in the type, we are often brought into collision with strong and determined enemies, the world, the flesh, and Satan, doubts, fears, darkness, temptations, and a great fight of afflictions, which look much more like the condition that Israel was in on both sides of Jordan than anything which we are looking for after the dissolution of our mortal bodies. Some of the tribes went over Jordan and assisted in fighting the battles, and then returned and chose their inheritance on the other side: this could not be applied to those who have died and gone to heaven, as none have returned or chosen their inheritance in this life. But there are, no doubt, some who have experienced a work of grace in their hearts who are ready to buckle on their armor and fight valiantly for the truth when it is assailed, who, from some cause, to us unaccountable, have taken their stand on

the opposite side of Jordan, or Christian baptism, from that occupied by the church.

Without designing any disrespect for the opinions of brethren who apply the figure differently from what we understand it, we submit what we have written as our view on the subject.

Middletown, N.Y.,
September 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 258 – 260

DANIEL 2:44

“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever (Daniel 2:44).”

This subject has been so frequently discussed, both through the columns of our paper and otherwise, that we have no new light to give, nor do we intend now to attempt a general explanation of the text. We propose only to attend to the special inquiries of our friend, and if we can help his mind on the points embraced in his inquiry, we shall be most happy to do so.

The great image which Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his vision Daniel, by inspiration, interpreted to represent four successive forms of government, or the four great empires which should succeed each other, filling up the space of time from the date of that vision, as we believe, until the present time. The Chaldeans, then existing, were the head of gold, but soon to be reduced by the Medes and Persians, which were the breast and arms of silver. Its belly and thighs of brass represented the Grecian government, which followed. His legs of iron denoted the Roman empire, in its original strength; and the mixture of iron and clay extending the Roman government to its extremities of feet and toes, partly strong and partly weak, by divisions and revolutions divided into ten kingdoms, embracing the rise and fall of the Papal anti-christ, whose last vestige of temporal power became extinct, in exact fulfillment of prophecy, in 1866, or last year.

The kings, in the days of whom the God of heaven would set up his kingdom, may include all from Nebuchadnezzar to the present time, for the prophecy does not limit the time of the

setting up of that kingdom, only that it should be in the days of these kings. But the fulfillment of the prophecy shows that it was in the time of the Roman power, and in the days of the Caesars, that God set up his kingdom. The kingdom to be set up by the God of heaven, in distinction from all earthly kingdoms, and which, unlike these four great empires, should not pass from one dynasty to another, but remain forever under the government of him whose "throne is for ever and ever (Psalm 45:6; Hebrews 1:8)" is beyond a doubt the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The days of *these kings* have terminated, and no other kingdom of the kind has been set up. This kingdom was at hand when John came preaching and baptizing; it was delivered from the wrath and dominion of the law when Christ arose from the dead; and it was set up and organized when Christ came in all the glory of his Father and ascended his Mediatorial throne, with his apostles setting on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. This occurred on the day of Pentecost. But this kingdom is not a *visible* kingdom to any but those who are born again.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 472 – 473

DANIEL III. 25.

“He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God.”

Not only to give us an instance of the mighty power and constant faithfulness of the God of the Hebrews, in the deliverance of his confiding people from the decrees of kings, from the violence of fire, from the mouths of lions, and from the jaws of death, were the records made, in the book of the prophet Daniel, which have excited the admiration of the saints in all subsequent ages, but, as we conceive, they were also intended to set forth in metaphor, the important doctrine of the vital union of Christ and his church, and to prefigure what was in the counsel and purpose of God to be more fully developed in the fullness of the dispensation of times.

In replying to the inquiry of our dear brother Montgomery, we might say much in regard to the personal history of the three Hebrew children who were cast into the excessively heated furnace by order of Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and draw from their faith and confidence in God, and their fidelity under the most trying circumstances, lessons of great importance to the tried family of God, in all after ages. The inspired writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in the eleventh chapter, refers to this display of God’s power and providence, as an example of the invincible power of the faith of God’s elect, and classes it among numerous other signal displays of what God hath wrought in days of old, in the defense of his own cause and people.

But we propose briefly to trace in this article what we regard as the figurative import of the subject, and submit such views as we have to the superior judgment of brother Montgomery, and of all who may read.

These three Hebrews or Jews we regard as emblematic of the election of grace, under three dispensations of time, namely, from Adam to Moses, from Moses to the coming of Christ, and from the advent of Christ, or the setting up of his kingdom, throughout the gospel dispensation to the end of the world. While Nebuchadnezzar, the King of Babylon, may represent the man of sin, the son of perdition, or rather the spirit which rules and presides over the kingdom of darkness, Babylon, the dominion of this king, with its numerous provinces, is used in Revelation as figurative of anti-Christ, as seated on the scarlet colored beast. At least Babylon will truly represent a place of captivity and bondage to the people of God who are Jews spiritually, and whose circumcision is not outward in the flesh, but in the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. "For if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

Compare this application of the figure under consideration, with what is signified by the three illustrious patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as embodying all the chosen people of God; or what Moses saw displayed in the bush which was, like the three Hebrews, enveloped in the fiery element and yet not consumed, because the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob dwelt with them in the burning bush, as the form of the fourth dwelt with the Hebrews in the burning fiery furnace. These, with many other striking figures of the Old Testament, exhibit what has ever been witnessed in all ages of the world, namely, that God has chosen his people in a furnace of affliction, and that he is present always with them in all their afflictions to preserve and to deliver them.

In the New Testament we have also substantially the same presentation, in the vision which Peter saw of the sheet which contained the variety of four-footed beasts, and

creeping things, which God had cleansed, and which in that case were used to signify to Peter that God had a redeemed, cleansed people in all the kingdoms, and in all the tribes of earth. And as this sheet was at first let down from heaven with all of its contents, so the provisions of grace and salvation contained all the elect of God, before any manifestation was ever made to men on earth, and as the sheet was three times displayed, so the three dispensations of time signified have witnessed the revelations of the bride, the Lamb's wife, coming down from God out of heaven, and being manifested on the earth as Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world, and which was prepared for the saints before the foundation of the world. And after the third manifestation of the sheet with the same cleansed contents, it was also received together up into heaven, nothing having been added nor aught diminished from what the sheet actually contained when first let down, so we may learn that all the church of God was chosen and sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately, in the fullness of the dispensation of times, all called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; and being all saved and called, and brought experimentally into the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, all are ultimately received up into heaven, as the place of their origin.

The manner in which God's people are subjected to the fiery trials which Peter says are for the trial of their faith, is well illustrated in the case of the three Hebrews. Their religion and their faith essentially differ from the religion and faith of the world, and their God is quite as distinct from the gods of this world. And while all others can accommodate themselves and their religion to suit the times and fashions of the world, God's people have always been, now are, and forever will be,

a peculiar people. They shall dwell alone, (religiously) and shall not be reckoned with the nations. Because they are the sons of God, the world knows them not, for the world knew not their divine Lord and Master.

Yet unknown though they are by the world, all the religion of the world is originated, planned and designed so as to oppose them. In the getting up of old Nebuchadnezzar s religious excitement, we trace the very elements of the religious excitements which now prevail in modern anti-Christ. First a god, composed of gold, is set up and dedicated, its splendor and cost are well calculated to fascinate the worshipers of mammon, and secure the adoration of the lovers of the precious metal, who bow down before it, and ascribe to it a power to control the destiny of men, as gold and silver are deified by will-worshipers at the present time, who ascribe to such corruptible things the power of securing the salvation of the world. Then to make the golden idol still more popular with the deluded sons of men, every possible appeal is made to their carnal senses. The princes and the nobility, the aristocracy and the rulers of darkness of this world, are called together to lend their aid and influence to the magnificence of the golden deity. All manner of musical instruments which have charms for human or carnal ears, are put in requisition to lend attractions to the scene, and for all those for whom neither the image nor the music have sufficient power to charm, the burning fiery furnace is prepared in order to awe into submission all who have conscientious scruples, and a death warrant is prepared for all dissenters, and the object is the extermination from the earth of all who will not worship the beast or its image. How well our Arminian neighbors have copied the type presented in our text, will be seen by observing the basis of their modern idolatry to be gold, or its equivalent. Money is called for and collected for the professed and undisguised object of saving souls from everlasting

perdition. The image assumes the imposing form of a Mission Society, a Tract or a Bible Society, or a combination of all these humanly invented societies as so many heads or horns to the image. The great men of this world, the rich, the learned and the popular, are courted, and the most magnificent and costly temples are built and decorated with all that can charm the carnal eye. Worldly honor, fame and pecuniary emoluments are offered, and then if the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery and dulcimer, are deemed too antiquated for the progressive age, the more modern instruments of organs, bells, fiddles, and such other instruments as are used at the circus and theatre, for attracting the admiration of the thoughtless and the vain, are added.

But with all the attractions of gaudy temples, golden idols, popular and fashionable devotees, musical instruments, foppish preachers, and man-pleasing preaching, modern anti-Christ cannot well do without a large quantity of terror. The furnace must be heated, and the dissenter admonished of his doom if he still refuses to comply with the terms of peace. Fall down and worship the image, and you shall be caressed, but refuse to do so at your peril. Fire and brimstone is lavishly dealt out by modern wire-pullers, and every appeal is made to terrify into compliance the timid and the weak; but where these threats of future wrath fail to intimidate, the rulers of the darkness of this world in rage command that their furnace be heated at least seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated, and the mightiest energies of all the Babylonish agents are commissioned to cast the Hebrews, or those who trust in the living God, into the midst of the burning furnace. To let loose their slanders, reproaches, persecutions, ridicule and proscription upon all who question the real deity of their golden idols.

But thus far all the engines of destruction prepared by the powers of darkness for the extinction of the church of God, have failed, utterly failed, because God is in the midst of his Zion, therefore she shall not be moved, her God will help her, and that right early. He is in the midst of his little flock and where two or three, as in the case of the Hebrews, are gathered together in Christ's name, though it be in the midst of a burning fiery furnace, there is he also in their midst, as he was in the midst of the three Hebrews in their fiery trial. Before we close, we will remark that the king of Babylon is never to be trusted, his edicts commanding his subjects throughout the provinces of his vast empire to worship the God of the Jews, betrayed the same ignorance and murderous propensity as that commanding them to worship his image. All that the monarchs or governments of the earth are required to do for the church of God, is to let her alone. The God whom we serve is able to sustain his own cause, and to deliver his children out of the hand of the kings and potentates of the earth who shall dare to molest them.

How this heathen king knew that the form of the fourth whom he saw, was like the Son of God, we shall not attempt to explain, only that he was made to see and confess that there was a power there displayed far beyond what any being inferior to the Son of God could display, and like Balaam, he was obliged to speak the words which God put in his mouth.

One word more. These men of God are seen by their persecutors walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. This has astonished the enemies of God's people in all ages; the bush is all on fire, but it is not consumed. The fire of opposition rages, and its wrathful flames envelop the saints, but still they walk on at large; the cords by which they were bound hand and foot are burnt off, but they have no hurt, their hair is not singed, nor has the smell of fire attached to them. Their enemies are consumed, but they are

delivered and promoted, and show in the sequel of their trial what all the saints of God must witness, that “All things do work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 118 - 123

THE DEAD

Mr. Editor: A disease known as putrid sore throat, or *Diptheria,* has visited our section during the past winter, and, like a destroying angel, hovered over our habitation. My youngest three children - one a boy of ten years, the others, girls, aged 12 and 8 years respectively - were, within the space of one month, taken away from this, as we trust, to the upper and better world.

JOHN S. HOBBIE.

P.S. - You are aware there has been great controversy about the state of the dead; will you, as soon as you have the opportunity, please give your views as to the consciousness of the dead.

Reply: Modern Spiritualism has made a great stir in the world within a few past years, and, like many other gross absurdities, made a fierce blaze, and died. We have regarded the pretensions of its advocates as too absurd and infidel to require from us a serious notice. It has pretended to demonstrate, by mystic raps and other mediums, that the dead are not only conscious, but ready to hold an active correspondence with the living. It is sufficient for christians to know that their pretensions are all in the face of all divine revelation contained in the scriptures. One thing we conclude must be self-evident - that which is conscious is not dead - cannot be dead, for consciousnes is life. But in death, what is it that dies? - not the soul, nor the immortal spirit that is born of God. The dust returns to dust, and that is quite as unconscious as any other dust of the earth. But not so with the spirit; that returns to God who gave it. And whether it be the saint or the unregenerate, we have no idea that anything but the body becomes unconscious. At all events, we know that the life given to the saints in the new birth is immortal

life; it therefore cannot die, nor do we believe it can become unconscious. “And whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?” - John xi. 26. The dying thief received the gracious assurance that he should be on that same day with Christ in paradise; which certainly is not an unconscious, but a state of conscious happiness. His tortured body would remain upon the cross and there become unconscious; but that spirit of immortality which was given him in Christ, should be transported to the paradise of God. The spirits of the justified are perfected in happiness, and clothed with their house which is from heaven; while their earthly bodies moulder unconsciously in the graves, until their final resurrection; then, but not till then, shall they be changed, fashioned, and made like the glorious body of their risen and ascended Redeemer. Their mortal shall put on immortality - their corruptible shall put on incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. The heathenish notion entertained by many of the fanatics of the present time that departed spirits are conscious of what is transpiring on the earth, watching their kindred and old acquaintances who survive them, has no foundation in truth. If such were the case, heaven itself would fail to afford perfect happiness or contentment to the glorified spirits of the redeemed. But there the wicked cease from troubling and there the weary are at rest. There, like David, they behold the face of their God in righteousness; there are they satisfied, when they awake, with his likeness. - Psa. Xvii. 15.

Until we depart hence, we have no possible way of knowing anything of the state of the departed, only what God has been pleased to reveal to us in his word and by his Spirit. If it were for our good or God’s glory, he would have given us more knowledge of the subject. But as it is, it becomes us to “Be still and know that the Lord is God, and submit the whole to him, having the assurance that Justice and Judgment are

the habitation of his throne. Righteousness and Truth go before his face.” It is enough to know -

“My flesh shall slumber in the ground
Till the last trumpet’s joyful sound
Then burst her chains in sweet surprise,
And in my Savior’s image rise.”

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 487 - 489

DEATH IN ADAM, LIFE IN CHRIST.

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” - 1 Cor. xv. 22.

AT the close of his letter, published in our last number, brother Culp, of Tennessee, requested our views on the above written text.

In establishing the doctrine of the resurrection, the apostle comes in this text to speak of the two distinct headships to which the people of God stand connected, viz: *Adam* and CHRIST: the former is the figure of the latter; the first was natural, the second is spiritual; the one was made a living soul, the other a Quickening Spirit; the first was of the earth earthy, the second Adam is the Lord from heaven. As natural beings we were created in the natural Adam, and were in him when he transgressed the law of his Creator, so that the sentence of death that fell on Adam as a consequence of his transgression, involved his posterity: “Death has passed on all men because all have sinned.” Adam being the legitimate head and representative of all the human family, all the human family die in him. As transgression, guilt and death attach to us in our relation to the first Adam, from Adam and from all his posterity, we are cut off from all hope of life or happiness, all we possess of the Adamic nature is death: and in the absence of the provisions of grace treasured up for the heirs of salvation in Jesus Christ, we are excluded from the last ray of life or mercy. The transgression and death of Adam did not effect the angels of glory, for they were not in him, nor could they be represented by him, but in

Adam *all*die; that is, all that had an existence in him, of course all that should ever proceed from him by generation.

Even so in Christ shall all be made alive. Christ is not an earthly or natural head; his headship therefore does not relate to the human family as such; but he is a spiritual head, and represents a spiritual people, a people whose spiritual life was given them in him before the world began. In this Christ is evidently the antitype of the natural Adam: all the spiritual race were created in him, chosen in him, loved in him, secured and complete in him, before they had an earthly existence in the natural Adam. Therefore it is just as certain that all the spiritual seed of Christ shall be quickened and brought into the inheritance of the Son of God as it is that all the decendants of Adam are subjects of death. In Christ all shall be made alive - first, in the work of regeneration they shall be made alive from their natural state of death in trespasses and sins; and secondly, in the resurrection of their bodies: on which subject the inspired apostle is treating in the chapter from which the text is taken.

As we are all subject to death and ruin by virtue of our relationship to Adam as our natural head, even so we, the redeemed of the Lord, are the heirs of life and immortality by virtue of our relationship to Christ our spiritual Head. As by relation to Adam his transgression fixed guilt and death on us, so by virtue of pre-existing relationship and union to Christ his perfect work and righteousness is imputed to us, and he having in that relationship come under the law to redeem his people from under the law, having canceled the demands of the law, and brought in everlasting righteousness for his people, they shall all be made alive in him; but no where else. In him they have life; their life is hid with him in God, and because he lives they shall live also.

We do not believe, with some, that the ungodly are finally raised from the dead by virtue of Christ’s resurrection; for they are not to be raised with the saints, nor to life and immortal glory; but they shall finally be raised when death and hell shall be challenged to deliver up their dead; they shall arise then to a resurrection of damnation - a resurrection of shame and everlasting contempt. The resurrection of the bodies of all that are Christ’s shall take place at the sound of the trumpet of God, and at the voice of the archangel; they shall meet their Lord in the air and so shall be forever with him. After the resurrection of the dead in Christ, the dead that are not in Christ shall be raised in the manner before stated.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
August 16, 1841.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
pages 707 – 709

DEACONS

Rusk, Texas, April 23, 1880.

Elder G. Beebe & Son: We do not wish to burden you with these questions, but we really need instruction. We are little church, of which I am a member; we were constituted about one year ago. We have no preacher or deacons; in regard to deacons we wish for instruction. We have been trying to get a presbytery to come and ordained deacons for us. I think it is the practice here among our churches to ordained deacons by a presbytery. I see in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES of April 15th, that you think the deacons may be ordained by the action of the church, or by the vote of the church. We want a deacon, and one proper instruction, as we are young and ignorant, and make this appeal to your more mature judgment on the subject.

Allow me to trouble you further, as it may be the last time. If the person we desire should serve us as deacon has a wife who is not a member of the church, does this disqualify him for being a deacon? We wish to know whether their role given in 1 Timothy III. 11 requires of the deacons wife that she shall be a professor or not; and do the requisitions supply to her if she is not a professor of religion?

Brethren Beebe, if not too much trouble, please let us know your mind on the subject through our family paper, the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and you will greatly oblige a one and fills truly as the lease sheep in all the flock; and if I could only know that I am a sheep, even astray one, I would be better satisfied.

U. J. BELL.

REPLY: – We feel our incompetency to give the instruction concerning deacons which brother Bell has asked for. In regard to the ordination, or manner of setting them apart to the work, we have given our views, in reply to brother Demaree, in our issue for April 15th, of this year. In regard to the special qualifications of a deacon, we are instructed in 1 Timothy iii. 8-13, "Likewise *must* the deacons *be* grave, not double tongued, not given too much wine, not greedy a filthy lucre; holding ministry of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of the deacon, being *found* blameless." We have copied these directions as they are found in our versions of the scriptures, with the supplied words marked by*Italics*. The first proving them is, as we understood, to ascertained by proof that they possess these indispensable requisitions; and if they are found blameless, than they are to use the office of a deacon. The further directions are of what the wife of the deacon (if he has one) *must* be. If the deacon possesses all the above named requisitions, he is not to be forbidden to use the office of the deacon. And he is allowed to have one, and but one wife; but she is required to possess and maintain the characteristics given in the connection, for if she possesses the opposite rates, she would seriously retard him in his official duties as a deacon. The words, "Let the deacons be the husband of one life," are no more imperative than the words, "let them use the office," &c. They express liberty, rather than a command. We do not understand that all who possess the requisite qualifications are commanded to use the office; but they are at liberty, or are eligible. "Let them," when proved, use the office. And allow them to have one wife, who was grave, not slanderous, sober and faithful in all things. If the member, having all the other requisitions named, can not use the office unless he has a wife, then one who has a wife, and all the other requisitions, should his wife die, would be disabled by her death to use the office until he should marry again.

It is not said that his wife must be a member, or that her holding a membership would meet the essential requirement. A deacon’s wife may be a member, and still be seriously deficient in gravity, sobriety and faithfulness in all things.

It is said also all the Bishop, or Elder, that he “must be blameless, the husband of one life;” but Paul himself was unmarried, and we presume many, and probably a large majority, of the ministers of the gospel in the primitive church, including Bishops and Elders, were unmarried. But as a plurality of wives was allowed by the Government of the Roman Empire, it is generally understood that this instruction of the apostle was restrictive, forbidding that they should have but one life. Paul was not a great admirer of the connubial relations, for he would that others to whom he wrote or even as he was in that respect. That more than one wife was at that time allowed in the church to any of the members, we think very improbable; but that the Bishop should have more than one, was as improper as that he should fail to be vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given the hospitality, apt to teach; and not given to wine, and be no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, not a brawler, or covetous.

We submit these views only as our understanding of the subject, to be tested by the word and spirit of the Lord.
Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown N.Y., June 1, 1880

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 11
June 1, 1880

DEACONS AND DEACONS' WIVES

Brother Beebe: Will you please give your views, through the "Signs" as to whether it is indispensable that a Deacon's wife should be a member of the church with her husband, and oblige some

Enquiring Brethren,
Alabama.
May 27, 1866.

Reply: No rule given by the apostles for the faith, order, or practice of the church of God may be dispensed with. All their instructions are imperative, and should be so regarded and obeyed. The apostle in I Timothy 3, says, "A bishop must be the husband of one wife;" and of the deacons he also says, "Even so must their wives (the deacons' wives) be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husband of one wife," etc. This is about all the instruction we can find in the New Testament bearing on the subject of enquiry. The term, or word, *bishop,* clearly and beyond dispute signifies an overseer of the flock, the same as the pastors among us are held. Of those the apostle says, "A bishop *must be* the husband of one wife." As polygamy was tolerated to some extent in Oriental countries in the apostles' time, it is thought by some that the apostle only designed to restrict the bishop or deacon to one wife, or to prohibit their having more than one wife at the same time. But this seems to us hardly probably, as it would seem to imply that other members might have a plurality of wives, which we find most clearly forbidden by our Savior himself. (See Matthew 5:27,28; Mark 10:2-12; compared with Hebrews 12:4, and Romans7:l-3.) To us it seems that, while every pastor or bishop is required to be the husband of one wife, who with

his children and household are to be judiciously ruled by him; that the other ministers of the word were not so required, as Paul himself, and others were not included, for they were without wives. The same qualifications here stated seem to be equally required of the deacons. This we infer from the words, “Likewise (or in like manner) must the deacons be grave,” etc. “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own house well.” Such are the instructions and rules laid down. We have neither authority nor disposition to diminish one jot or tittle.

We are aware, however, that in many of the small churches such deacons cannot be found, and the propriety of appointing others, approximating the rule as nearly as possible, is to say the very least, exceedingly doubtful. It seems to us better to wait until the Lord shall supply the church with members possessing these scriptural requisitions than to appoint others. Expediency is a very unsafe guide for us in matters relating to the kingdom of Christ. The propriety of attempting to organize churches when and where the proper gifts are not to be found is very questionable. Would it not be safer for the little clusters of brethren and sisters to retain their membership in the nearest churches of our order, even if somewhat remote, than to attempt to organize without the requisite organic members?

An organization is not indispensably essential to the communion, fellowship, edification and social worship of the twos and threes which may be gathered together in Christ’s name for communion and social devotion. The ordinances of the gospel may be observed, baptism administered, and the supper received by those in churches in fellowship duly qualified and authorized by their respective churches to administer them to such groups of disciples who cannot attend with the organized churches.

A deacon possessing all the qualifications of gravity, honesty, veracity, obstinence, indifference to the wealth and honors of the world, will be still better prepared to fill the office, having a wife of the character required. They are to occupy a position in the church accessible to all the members who may wish for counsel, and if the deacon be the husband of a wife who is also a believer, and equally interested in the welfare of the saints, it will greatly promote his usefulness as an adviser and counselor in the church.

If the seven men which were set apart to attend to the widows in the primitive church were, as is generally believed, deacons, their calling was to relieve the administrators of the word from any cares or burdens which embarrassed them in the preaching of the word. In such a calling a wide field of labor is assigned them. The widows, and all who require aid from the church are to be sought out, and their temporal circumstances ascertained, and suitable appropriations made at the expense of the church, for their relief. In visiting and enquiring of the conditions of the widows, a deacon who has a wife of the right disposition and piety would greatly aid him in his duties. There seems to us to be sufficient apparent reasons why a deacon should be a married man, and that his wife be a discreet and spiritually minded believer. Her faithful labors with the sisters in the church, as well as making provisions for the relief of the ministry, looking after all the temporal affairs of the church, are scarcely less important than his. Those are greatly mistaken who suppose that the deacon’s work is only to wait on the table at the administration of the Lord’s Supper, for we have no special direction given that they should officiate at the Lord’s table more than in attention to the tables of the poor of the churches.

Of course we give what we have written only as some of our own views on the subject of enquiry. So far as we know, the

order of all our churches is not entirely uniform on the subject, and we only submit the suggestions embodied in this article to the consideration of our churches, and more especially in reply to some Enquiring Brethren.

Middletown, N.Y.
July 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 357 - 359

DEATH OF MISS HATTIE M. BEEBE.

On Sunday, the 14th of April, our house was the scene of the most terrible calamity that has ever befallen our family. Miss Hattie M. Beebe, eldest daughter of G. J. Beebe, and grand-daughter of the Editor of this paper, came to her death by a pistol shot by her own hands, at about five o'clock in the afternoon. She was aged 22 years and 4 months.

The circumstances relating to and resulting in this appalling calamity, so far as known to us, are briefly these: she had been laboring under a mental malady, producing frequent and excessive alternations of extreme hilarity and gloomy depression of mind, more or less marked at times for several years past, with intervals of apparent composure, at which no one unacquainted with her would suspect her of insanity.

In childhood she was uncommonly intelligent and promising, and her talents were cultivated by the most careful parental attention, at the best educational institutions in the country. Her progress and improvement was all that could be desired. After several years attendance at the excellent school of Mrs. Houston, in this village, and at our village Academy, she was sent to the celebrated institutions at Pittsfield, Massachusetts and Washington, D.C. No pains nor expense were spared by her father, in furnishing the means for a thorough education.

At the outbreak of war in 1861, she was brought home from Washington in the midst of a session of her school, but one day before the interruption of traveling communication by a riot at Baltimore. While at the latter place, her mental malady began to assume an unmistakable form, so much so as to elicit remark. During the year following, while at home, its development continued until in the spring of 1862, by

advice of eminent physicians, she was taken to the Bloomingdale Asylum for treatment. While there, which was about six months, her improvement was not such as had been hoped for. At her own wish, her father removed her from Bloomingdale, N.Y., to the Asylum at Brattleboro, Vt., where she remained nearly a year, when it was thought she had so much improved that she could be safely discharged. She was then taken home in the fall of 1863, where she remained until the following Christmas, when she was taken to visit her aunt at Cannel, N.Y, and subsequently arrangements were made for her to remain and board there. She continued there until the following September, when she went to visit another relative at Norwick, Conn., and was boarded there by her father until she left there of her own accord, with a view of endeavoring to support herself. Having engaged with some young ladies of her acquaintance in some employment in Newark, N.J. a few weeks, her mind again yielding to mental depression, she left Newark and came to our house, where she received a cordial welcome to make her home as long as she pleased. During that time she has been alternately subject to extravagant hilarity and most gloomy depression of mind, with lucid intervals of cheerfulness and seeming sanity. Her spells of depression sometimes came on suddenly, and at other times more gradually; but in all of them she invariably sought seclusion, especially when there was any company visiting the house. Even her most cherished friends were avoided by her at such times, and it annoyed her to be urged to greater cheerfulness or sociability. Her temperament was naturally gentle and agreeable, and when relieved from her unbalanced state of mind, she seemed remarkably intelligent, chaste, and refined in her manners and deportment. Outbreaks of severe ravings were not frequent, but sometimes clearly demonstrative of serious alienation of reason. Such marked developments were carefully concealed as far as possible from the observation of all except those of our household, in the hope

she might ultimately overcome them, and to prevent any from alluding to them in her calmer moments, which to one of her sensitiveness was very annoying.

At about the first of March last, she made a visit to our daughter, Mrs. F. C. Tuthill, in New York City, for whom she entertained a great partiality, and as Mrs. Beebe was going to visit our son, Elder William L. Beebe, in Georgia for a few weeks, arrangements were made for her to remain with her aunt during the absence of her grand-mother. During her stay in the city she continued as usual, and on Mrs. Beebe's return from Georgia, she called for her, and brought her home with her. They both arrived here on Friday evening, April 12. She was on her arrival apparently somewhat depressed in her mind. On Saturday, the 13th, her appearance was very sad, yet very gentle and affectionate. We observed an unusual melancholy expression in her countenance as she came to her meals, and we spake of it to the family after she had retired to her room; but we observed no other mark of unusual agitation than that sad expression; her eyes looked as though she had been weeping. We all tried to cheer her, but as she often told us, she could not control or prevent those *blues,* as she called them. On Sunday morning, and at dinner at noon, which was the last time we saw her alive, she seemed much improved in her appearance, inspiring the hope that her depression was abating. She had frequently said to her aunt that she did not fear death as she had formerly. And on the fly-leaf of her Bible, which she had with her on the fatal day, was found written in her handwriting, "God forgive me; I am sorely tempted." While ourself and some of the family were at meeting in the Hall, our daughter, Mrs. Carmichael, who had remained at home, went into the room where Hattie was sitting on a chair and reclining on the bed, and urged her to come into the diving room and sit with her by the fire, as she was alone. But she replied, "O, I can't, I can't." This was at

about 4 o’clock p.m. This is the last time she was seen alive by any one. A few minutes later, as nearly as we can judge, our grand-son, Otis Carmichael, was in the wood house and heard something fall, and at the same time an exclamation, but not loud or startling, “Oh!” Thinking that the noise proceeded from his mother’s room, he ran up stairs to see if she was hurt; saw nothing wrong there, and listened a moment, and heard nothing more; concluded no one was hurt, and thought no more of the noise until the dreadful reality was realized.

Our meeting at the Hall was dismissed at 5 p.m., and some company came with us into the house, and we were engaged in conversation until nearly seven o’clock, when the company retired and the family went down into the dining room to tea, which was waiting for us. As we took our seats at the table, a messenger was sent by Mrs. Beebe to call Hattie to her tea. The girl returned, and said Hattie was not there. She was immediately sent again, as we were sure she must be there. She then renewed her pursuit, and in a few moments reported that Hattie was on the floor in Benton L. Beebe’s room, between the bed and the partition, and would not answer her. This report alarmed us all, and we left the table. Mrs. Carmichael being in advance as we approached, we heard her exclaim, “0 God! she is dead.” Immediately we were on the spot, and found it evidently true. Her body filled the whole space between the bed and the partition and we tried to draw her body out to examine whether there were any signs of life, but we failed. Dr. John Taylor was called in, and was immediately on the spot, and with his assistance we removed her into an adjoining room. As we were doing this, Mrs. Carmichael found the pistol on the side of the bed. We then examined, but could find no mark of violence, until her dress was opened, when the wound was discovered immediately over her heart, where the ball had entered. No noise like the report of a pistol had been heard, the pistol

found by her was not more than four inches long, a mere toy, and it is presumed she deadened its sound by pressing its muzzle against her breast. She undoubtedly died instantly as the ball must have entered her heart. She had probably been dead about two hours when discovered. The overwhelming horror of the scene when the discovery was made we cannot describe, nor will we attempt it. The whole community was startled, and the unrestrained sympathy of the whole village was most kindly expressed without distinction of party or sects. The coroner's inquest was held on Monday, and the verdict was given, in substantially these words: Hattie M. Beebe came to her death by a pistol shot by her own hand while laboring under great depression of mind.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, and although the day was very rainy, the assembly was very large, and as probably not a fourth part of them could be seated in our Hall, the trustees of the Second Presbyterian Church of this village kindly tendered the use of their house which was greatly accepted, where Elder William L. Benedict of Warwick preached to us a comforting discourse from the words, "Be still and know that I am God," after which the body was conveyed to the cemetery at New Vernon, and laid in a grave by the side of her deceased mother.

At some subsequent period, if spared, when our own mind shall more fully recover from the shock which has fallen so heavily upon us, we propose to give our views on the subject, of what this inscrutable providence suggests to our mind. We desire the prayers of our kindred in Christ that God may sanctify this severe stroke to the stricken and afflicted parent, grand-parents and their families, sustain us in our deep affliction, and teach us by his Spirit to be still and know that *he* is God.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 13 – 16

DECREASE OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS IN MISSOURI.

WE copy the following missionary effusion from the *Cross and Journal*. The article is by that paper credited to a periodical in Missouri, called the *Mission Baptist*.

"BROTHER KINCAID: – The *Missouri Baptist* inquires whether brother Kincaid cannot make it consistent with the great object of his visit to his native land, to make a tour to the West. The simple narrative of his labors and sufferings in the cause of Christ would hasten the decease of Anti-Missions ten years at least, convert a number of Omission Baptists, and revive the spirit of the missionary brethren."

IT is said of Saul, after he had finished his preparatory studies at the school of Gamaliel, that "He breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord;" and in his zeal for their extermination he went to the board of directors, or rather, to the executive officer of that board, and desired credentials for a missionary excursion, with authority to apprehend any of the Old School Baptists, whether they were men or women, that he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. The Jewish *sanhedrim* was at that time a regularly organized missionary board, and by their agents were compassing sea and land to make proselytes; and the high priest to whom Saul applied for a commission, was duly authorized to issue such documents to every devoted, pious, learned and indefatigable spirit, whose every breath exhaled slaughter and vengeance against those disciples of the Lord who protested against their *modus operandi* in the conversion of the world. Those primitive brethren and sisters, who by the persecution were driven from their homes at Jerusalem, were, some of them, enjoying a momentary respite in the vicinity of Damascus, greatly to the annoyance,

however, of the devout worshipers at the synagogue of that place. We have little doubt that the persecuting and infuriated Jews of Damascus, when they were advised of the contemplated mission of Saul to their city, entertained views arid sentiments very similar to those entertained by the *Missouri Baptist*, and re-echoed by the genial tones of the *Cross and Journal*" of Ohio. They had a good reason to believe that a visit from Saul would hasten the extermination of the Anti-Mission Baptists from among them, as the missionists of our western states have that a visit from their redoubtable Kincaid will result in the massacre of the Old School Baptists of the Mississippi Valley. Nor were those blinded Jews more mistaken in their anticipations of a speedy overthrow of the Redeemer's kingdom, than are these mad men in the valley, in supposing a son of Anak among them can hasten ten years the destruction of God's chosen people against whom their wrath is kindled.

Saul actually set out on his mission of murder, and it is highly probable Mr. Kincaid also may on his, to scatter fire-brands, arrows and death among the children of God in Missouri; for our Lord has advised us that the time will come when whosoever killeth his people will think that he doeth God service. But God's arm is not shortened that he cannot save, nor is his ear dull that he cannot hear the cry of his children; he is as able to humble, bring to the ground, and even regenerate Mr. Kincaid, and reveal his Son in him if it be his blessed pleasure, as he was to perform that wonderful work in Saul.

In order to judge correctly whether Mr. Kincaid can make it consistent with the great object of his visit to his native land to make a tour to the West, and assist his brethren in the benevolent work of massacring the opposers of their craft, it will be necessary to know what was the great object of his return to America. So far as we can learn from the New

School journals, Mr. K. was induced to leave the field of his missionary labors to pay his devotions at the shrine of the American Mammon, under whose instigation he was induced to undertake to convert the benighted heathen from their favorite system of idolatry to the more fashionable system of modern invention. The ostensible object of his return was to arouse a more efficient and active spirit of missionism in the United States, by relating frightful stories concerning the poor heathen, of the self-denial, indefatigable labor, dreadful sufferings and indescribable patience of the poor missionaries, who are starving on milk and honey; and for the luxurious maintenance of whom a levy is made upon our citizens more than sufficient to support our federal government. In. order to expand the missionary spirit in our country, it is deemed necessary that the whole length and breadth of our land should be occupied; and to obtain the full occupancy of the country, the plan which Jezebel suggested to Ahab concerning the possession of Naboth’s vine yard, (see Kings xxi. 5-24) is to be revived and acted upon. The New School seem to be convinced that while the Old School Baptists continue to dwell upon the face of the earth, they will be unto them as Elijah was unto Ahab, and hence they resolve on their decease. But how mistaken! Their heated furnaces cannot burn the people of God when the form of him whom the king of Babylon saw is with them. The lions will not devour whom Daniel’s God protects, and all the Kincaids they can buy up with their filthy lucre shall be no more to Israel than was Goliath to David.

But if the western New School Baptists wish to try the experiment, they have only to offer to Mr. Kincaid the reward s of divination, similar to those offered to his prototype, Balaam, by that royal patron, the king of the Moabites, (Numbers xxii. 7) and there is very little doubt that Mr. K. will come with all his heart to curse Israel for the New School Baptists.

Whether the spirit of modern missionism be less malignant than that which our Lord detected in those pious missionary Jews whom be denounced as being of their father the devil, we shall leave our readers to judge. The evidence that the Jews were of Satan, was that the works of their father they would do, and he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him, &c. If the same murderous spirit were not in these modern missionists, would they consult methods for the decrease or death of those few remaining Old Fashioned Baptists in the western valley, only because they are *anti*, or against those God dishonoring institutions of men, on which the children of the wicked one depend so much for the conversion of the world to their craft?

By Omission Baptists the writer undoubtedly means those who do not expose, and possibly, may not be aware of the abomination of their schemes, and whose fault is that they do not put into their mouths or omit to honor and enrich the missionists by a surrender of their wealth, independence and rights. We leave such to make their own defence, as only the opposers of their craft are proscribed and condemned to die, and are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
October 1, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 344 – 347

DEFENSE OF RANTISM.

We understand the (Rev.) Doctor McCartee, of Goshen, in this county, is engaged in delivering a course of lectures on the subject of Baptism. This is a hazardous business; when Pædo-baptist doctors attempt a defense of rantism, they generally convince all their honest and intelligent hearers that they have no scriptural authority for their practice. The Doctor, however, as we are informed, (for we have not heard him,) has introduced a new argument. He says that when the primitive disciples administered immersion as baptism, the candidates were required to receive the ordinance naked, and if the Baptists would adhere to the primitive order they should imitate this part of the example. The learned Doctor reminds us of a certain attorney who attempted to establish the three following points in defense of his client, viz:

First. Said he, I will prove that the pitcher was broken when borrowed by my client.
Second. That it was whole when returned; and,
Third. That my client never borrowed it.

The Doctor and his associates assume that sprinkling is apostolical baptism, and contend that the Baptists err in holding that immersion is scriptural baptism, and sometimes deny that Jordan contained a sufficient quantity of water to immerse a person in; and yet, strange to relate, Dr. McCartee has discovered that the ancient disciples were immersed with their persons naked! Wonderful age, this!

New Vernon, N.Y.,
May 15, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Page 645

“DENYING THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM.”

2 Peter ii. 1.

OUR views on this scripture are called for by sister “E. B.” as will be seen in the postscript of her letter on page 21. of this number. The principle difficulty complained of in understanding the subject, is involved in the words, *The Lord that bought them,* applied to those who in verse 3, are subjects of judgment and damnation. By reference to our remarks on the 6th verse of this chapter, in our last number, the reader will discover that we hold those characters to be the angels which kept not their first estate. The text on which we are now to remark reads thus - ” But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

This epistle was addressed to the Hebrew brethren, such as had been scattered abroad by the persecution; this will appear by reference to the introduction of the first epistle; as also from his allusion to their having been addressed on the same subject, of the second coming of Christ, by our beloved brother Paul. See Chap. iii. 15. We will now proceed to notice the text - But there were false prophets also among the people, viz: among the people of Israel, to which nationally or according to the flesh, these brethren, as well as the false teachers belonged. This fact requiring for its confirmation nothing more than a reference to the Old Testament history of Israel, in almost every page of which these *sinning angels,*false prophets, sons of Belial, &c., were detected. Hence, from this palpable fact that in all ages of Israel the people were infested with false prophets, so now when Jesus

was ascended, and before he should be revealed in the utter destruction of Jerusalem, these Jewish converts to the christian faith, might, with certainty expect to be troubled with false teachers from the same quarter, viz: from among the Jews. In confirmation of our view of this subject we refer the reader to the solemn admonition of our Lord, to his disciples before he ascended. He told them He was going away, but would shortly return to them with pow& and great glory, and that some of them should live to witness the fulfilment of this promise; but they begged him to tell them when these things should be, and what would be the sign of his coming and of the end of the world? (i.e. that world). To which enquiries Jesus answered and said - " Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Matt. xxiv. 3 - 5. Again in same Chap. ver. 11. "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many;" again verses 23 - 27. "Then if any shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or lo there, believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you: For as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The testimony of our Lord in the concluding part of the xxiv. Chap. of Matt. and the instructions contained in the parables in the xxv. Chap., settles the point in regard to who these false prophets and false teachers were, and from whence they were. He calls. them his own servants, wicked servants, slothful servants, &c., also by the parable of the virgins, they are clearly presented as being of the stock of Abraham after the flesh, and were then, and soon should be found among his nominal disciples. Our readers will perceive that Peter was now addressing the scattered saints, under these very circumstances, and impressing on them these admonitions of his, and of our Lord. There shall be false teachers among

you; among you who are now waiting the fulfilment of your Lord’s predictions; you who are not to see death until these things are fulfilled; until your Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the Jews, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and to be admired by all who love his appearing. These false teachers should bring in damnable heresies; saying I am Christ, and lo here is Christ, and lo there; and “Since the fathers have fallen asleep, all things remain as they were, and where is the promise of his coming?” These were damnable heresies, and even amounted to denying the Lord that bought them. For they could not set themselves or any thing else up as Christ, without denying the true Christ; and. such heresy is damnable, because if Christ be rejected or denied, in his absence there is nothing can save from damnation. Hence could they, or could our modern false christs who set themselves up as intercessors, revival makers, &c., establish their doctrines, it would make the damnation of all who trust in Christ alone inevitable. But the main question with our sister is: “How can it be said that the Lord bought those false teachers, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not?” We have shown that these false prophets alluded to by Peter, were members of the national family of Israel, and on this account were called servants, foolish virgins; wicked and slothful servants, &c., it therefore remains for us to show how the Lord bought them. And first we take the ground that it was not in the redemption purchase, by which his elect are redeemed from damnation, or their damnation would slumber; nor are they redeemed from all iniquity, see Titus ii. 14, or they would not continue in the iniquitous course of promulgating damnable heresies, nor from wrath and the curse of the law, or their judgment, which dooms them to flaming fire, and utter destruction, would at least linger. But the question returns, How then were they bought? We answer, in that redemption purchase, by which the whole family of national Israel were

delivered from the house of bondage in Egypt, and elevated to a distinction above all other nations then under heaven. There redemption from Egypt is often referred to as being highly figurative of the redemption purchase which Christ has with his own blood, made of his own church from sin, death and hell, from the demands, wrath and curse of the law of God, and which secures to them all the benefits of Christ's mediatorial office. But while they in their distinct character as a nation were typical of the true and heavenly Jerusalem, they were only the Jerusalem which *then was,* and which was in bondage with her children, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. That judgment that lingered not, and that damnation that slumbered not, may well be called *swift destruction;* and this as far as related to a temporal display of their judgment, &c., was most dreadfully realized by those false prophets, when the sign was descried of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Their destruction was swift, like the vivid flash that leaping from the east shineth even unto the remote west, without allowing time for those who were upon the housetop to come down, to take any thing out of the house, nor such as were in the field to return to their houses. Behold, said Jesus, I have told you before! "As the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of man be; for as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." In this awful calamity those false teachers might consider this disdress as brought by themselves, as abundant warning had been given unto one and all to watch; yet setting aside all these admonitions of Christ and His apostles, they were swept away by these overflowing judgments. Under the influence of the spirit of God the apostle Peter very well knew, that while these vile perverters of the truth of God were drawing away many from their steadfastness, that

these impending judgments were gathering thick; and although they may count it pleasure to riot in the day time, and in the full light of all those admonitions which began to be spoken by Christ, and were confirmed and reiterated by those that heard him; and although they may be willingly and criminally ignorant of God's manner of computing time, (Chap. iii. 5.) and say, Where is the promise of his coming? verse 4; still the apostle knew and testified, The day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night, in which those old Jewish heavens should pass away with a great noise, &c. Nevertheless the apostle and many of the primitive saints, according to his promise, looked for (and finally realized) a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness, or wherein Christ should dwell.

From all the above-named considerations, Peter warned the saints, seeing they looked for such things, to improve from the circumstances in which they were placed; and we at this late age may also derive from these examples instruction in righteousness, to beware of false teachers, to watch and be sober; for we who have been by divine grace admitted into that heaven, wherein Jesus dwelleth, which the apostles looked for, how much more does it become us to consider what manner of persons we ought to be, in all holy conversation and godliness.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
January 15, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 580 – 585

“DENYING THE LORD THAT BOUGHT THEM.”

2 Peter ii. 1.

OUR views on this scripture are called for by sister “E. B.” as will be seen in the postscript of her letter on page 21. of this number. The principle difficulty complained of in understanding the subject, is involved in the words, *The Lord that bought them,* applied to those who in verse 3, are subjects of judgment and damnation. By reference to our remarks on the 6th verse of this chapter, in our last number, the reader will discover that we hold those characters to be the angels which kept not their first estate. The text on which we are now to remark reads thus - ” But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”

This epistle was addressed to the Hebrew brethren, such as had been scattered abroad by the persecution; this will appear by reference to the introduction of the first epistle; as also from his allusion to their having been addressed on the same subject, of the second coming of Christ, by our beloved brother Paul. See Chap. iii. 15. We will now proceed to notice the text - But there were false prophets also among the people, viz: among the people of Israel, to which nationally or according to the flesh, these brethren, as well as the false teachers belonged. This fact requiring for its confirmation nothing more than a reference to the Old Testament history of Israel, in almost every page of which these *sinning angels,*false prophets, sons of Belial, &c., were detected. Hence, from this palpable fact that in all ages of Israel the people were infested with false prophets, so now when Jesus

was ascended, and before he should be revealed in the utter destruction of Jerusalem, these Jewish converts to the christian faith, might, with certainty expect to be troubled with false teachers from the same quarter, viz: from among the Jews. In confirmation of our view of this subject we refer the reader to the solemn admonition of our Lord, to his disciples before he ascended. He told them He was going away, but would shortly return to them with pow& and great glory, and that some of them should live to witness the fulfilment of this promise; but they begged him to tell them when these things should be, and what would be the sign of his coming and of the end of the world? (i.e. that world). To which enquiries Jesus answered and said - " Take heed that no man deceive you; for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." Matt. xxiv. 3 - 5. Again in same Chap. ver. 11. "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many;" again verses 23 - 27. "Then if any shall say unto you, Lo here is Christ, or lo there, believe it not. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold I have told you: For as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." The testimony of our Lord in the concluding part of the xxiv. Chap. of Matt. and the instructions contained in the parables in the xxv. Chap., settles the point in regard to who these false prophets and false teachers were, and from whence they were. He calls. them his own servants, wicked servants, slothful servants, &c., also by the parable of the virgins, they are clearly presented as being of the stock of Abraham after the flesh, and were then, and soon should be found among his nominal disciples. Our readers will perceive that Peter was now addressing the scattered saints, under these very circumstances, and impressing on them these admonitions of his, and of our Lord. There shall be false teachers among

you; among you who are now waiting the fulfilment of your Lord’s predictions; you who are not to see death until these things are fulfilled; until your Lord shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the Jews, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and to be admired by all who love his appearing. These false teachers should bring in damnable heresies; saying I am Christ, and lo here is Christ, and lo there; and “Since the fathers have fallen asleep, all things remain as they were, and where is the promise of his coming?” These were damnable heresies, and even amounted to denying the Lord that bought them. For they could not set themselves or any thing else up as Christ, without denying the true Christ; and. such heresy is damnable, because if Christ be rejected or denied, in his absence there is nothing can save from damnation. Hence could they, or could our modern false christs who set themselves up as intercessors, revival makers, &c., establish their doctrines, it would make the damnation of all who trust in Christ alone inevitable. But the main question with our sister is: “How can it be said that the Lord bought those false teachers, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not?” We have shown that these false prophets alluded to by Peter, were members of the national family of Israel, and on this account were called servants, foolish virgins; wicked and slothful servants, &c., it therefore remains for us to show how the Lord bought them. And first we take the ground that it was not in the redemption purchase, by which his elect are redeemed from damnation, or their damnation would slumber; nor are they redeemed from all iniquity, see Titus ii. 14, or they would not continue in the iniquitous course of promulgating damnable heresies, nor from wrath and the curse of the law, or their judgment, which dooms them to flaming fire, and utter destruction, would at least linger. But the question returns, How then were they bought? We answer, in that redemption purchase, by which the whole family of national Israel were

delivered from the house of bondage in Egypt, and elevated to a distinction above all other nations then under heaven. There redemption from Egypt is often referred to as being highly figurative of the redemption purchase which Christ has with his own blood, made of his own church from sin, death and hell, from the demands, wrath and curse of the law of God, and which secures to them all the benefits of Christ's mediatorial office. But while they in their distinct character as a nation were typical of the true and heavenly Jerusalem, they were only the Jerusalem which *then was,* and which was in bondage with her children, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. That judgment that lingered not, and that damnation that slumbered not, may well be called *swift destruction;* and this as far as related to a temporal display of their judgment, &c., was most dreadfully realized by those false prophets, when the sign was descried of the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. Their destruction was swift, like the vivid flash that leaping from the east shineth even unto the remote west, without allowing time for those who were upon the housetop to come down, to take any thing out of the house, nor such as were in the field to return to their houses. Behold, said Jesus, I have told you before! "As the days of Noah were, so shall the coming of the Son of man be; for as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, and marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." In this awful calamity those false teachers might consider this disdress as brought by themselves, as abundant warning had been given unto one and all to watch; yet setting aside all these admonitions of Christ and His apostles, they were swept away by these overflowing judgments. Under the influence of the spirit of God the apostle Peter very well knew, that while these vile perverters of the truth of God were drawing away many from their steadfastness, that

these impending judgments were gathering thick; and although they may count it pleasure to riot in the day time, and in the full light of all those admonitions which began to be spoken by Christ, and were confirmed and reiterated by those that heard him; and although they may be willingly and criminally ignorant of God's manner of computing time, (Chap. iii. 5.) and say, Where is the promise of his coming? verse 4; still the apostle knew and testified, The day of the Lord would come as a thief in the night, in which those old Jewish heavens should pass away with a great noise, &c. Nevertheless the apostle and many of the primitive saints, according to his promise, looked for (and finally realized) a new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth Righteousness, or wherein Christ should dwell.

From all the above-named considerations, Peter warned the saints, seeing they looked for such things, to improve from the circumstances in which they were placed; and we at this late age may also derive from these examples instruction in righteousness, to beware of false teachers, to watch and be sober; for we who have been by divine grace admitted into that heaven, wherein Jesus dwelleth, which the apostles looked for, how much more does it become us to consider what manner of persons we ought to be, in all holy conversation and godliness.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
January 15, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 580 – 585

THE DESIGN AND END OF THE ADVENT OF CHRIST.

A correspondent in Ohio desires our views on John 18:37. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”

And sister F.L. Bagg, of Illinois, has requested our views on John 1:9. “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” First, as to the light, and then as to *every man* who is lightened.

As in our understanding of them, both passages involve substantially the same doctrine, we propose to embrace what we have to say on them in this article. We will however notice then in the order presented. The Savior of sinners was under arrest, he stood at the bar of Pilate, many grievous charges had been made against him by the Jews, and false witnesses had been bribed to testify against him, that he might be condemned to death. Pilate, who presided as judge, seemed to be greatly perplexed, knowing that it was for envy that the Jews had delivered him, and after a searching investigation could find no fault in him; he was afraid to condemn him, and still more afraid to release him, for fear of offending his murderous persecutors.

Among other questions, Pilate asked Jesus, “Art thou a king then?” To which Jesus replied in the words proposed for consideration. “Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” Our Lord Jesus Christ in his Mediatorial office and work is the only medium of divine revelation. All the secrets of eternity would have remained forever sealed

up from the human family, if the Lion of the tribe of Judah had not prevailed to take the book, and open the seals thereof. No other being was found in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, that was worthy; every other communication was closed forever. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Men by wisdom knew not God. The result of all the speculations of men, in all their vain researches, had utterly failed to find out God, and the wisdom, science and philosophy of men had only demonstrated their total ignorance of the true God and eternal life, while they had filled the world with many thousand idols, and involved the world in pagan darkness and superstition. God had hidden these things from the wise and prudent of the world, because so it seemed good in his sight. But behold, in due time the Messenger of the covenant made his advent to our benighted world, bearing the secrets of eternity, and as the "Faithful and true Witness," proclaimed, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. 11:27. All the knowledge which the prophets and holy men of old had of spiritual and eternal things, was revealed to them by him, and through him, "For the testimony {or witness} of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:10. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." I Pet. 1:10,11. To this end, and for this cause was Jesus born, and came into the world, to bear witness unto the truth. All that had been testified by his Spirit in the prophets concerning his incarnation, sufferings, and the glory that should follow, would have lacked confirmation, had he not come into the world as it was written of him. He had said by

his prophets in the testimony of his Spirit in them, “Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psa. 40:6, Heb. 19:9. His coming then into the world by a birth, was indispensably necessary to bear witness to the truth of what was written in the volume of God’s book concerning him. But, not only in confirmation of the promise of his coming, but his advent was equally indispensable for the verification of all that was written of him in the law and the prophets, and in the psalms. THE TRUTH, for the demonstration of which he came into the world, embraces the whole economy of grace, of which as the faithful and true witness he testified, is for ever established and irrefutably demonstrated by him, and this testimony includes his life, death, resurrection, and his inauguration as the King of saints, together with all spiritual revelation. He is the way, and the truth, and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by him. So vitally important is his witness, or testimony, that no point in the doctrine, order, or ordinances of his kingdom, can be established independently of it. We must have a “Thus saith the Lord” for our faith and practice, if we are his disciples. And to know that we are embraced in his salvation, we must have his Spirit to bear witness with our spirit that we are born of God. It was on no uncertain enterprise, and for the accomplishment of no indefinite work that he came into the word. In his ministry he has identified the truth in his own person, saying, “I am the Truth;” in his word witnessing, Thy word is truth; and in exposing all the hidden things of dishonesty. Now, as the witness which he bears makes the truth of God manifest, and as whatsoever maketh manifest is light, we shall see that the text in John 1:9, proposed by sister Baggs, is in perfect harmony with that on which the foregoing remarks have been written.

“That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” The particular light here designated

as the “true light,” is unquestionably the same which in the fourth verse was in our Lord Jesus Christ. “In him was light, and the light was the life of men.” It is the refulgent brightness of his Father’s glory, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ. His brightness, the prophet says, was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power. Hab.3:4. It is the light disclosed by testimony as the witness, faithful and true. The light shining from him as the Sun of Righteousness, which ushered in the gospel day, is the true light, in distinction from all the lights of nature, of reason, or of human science. Although men may denounce it as darkness, for they call all light darkness, and darkness they call light; but to all those in whose hearts God has shined, it is marvelous and true. But what avails the resplendent beams of noon to them that are blind, or dead? The light shines upon the dead and blind as well as upon the living, who have eyes to see and enjoy it. As light maketh manifest, so by the true light every thing is made manifest. This true light reveals to those, who have eyes, all things exactly as they are. The Jews who trusted in their own legal righteousness are exposed by this light. “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin.” John 15:22. Such is the effect of light, it makes manifest that which the darkness concealed. There is a wide difference between lighting and enlightening. Every man that cometh into the world is manifested in his real character by the true light; for it discriminates between life and death, between truth and error, between nature and grace. The sense in which it is said, “That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” cannot be rendered enlightened, without conflicting with the immediate connection. He who is this true light was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. The world then was not enlightened; yet the true state of the world was made manifest by this true light. The

natural sun lightens the natural world, and shines as well upon the blind as on such as can see. It lightens the inanimate as well as the living. The world must be the same world into which the incarnate Word came, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; the same world which was made by him, and yet knew him not. The world by wisdom knew not God. None of the princes of this world knew him; for if they had known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But the light of revelation so shines upon the hidden things of dishonesty as to bring them to light. It shineth in even darkness itself, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. Paul as an apostle, on the throne of judgment, by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, has forever settled the matter of the utter inability of man to approach unto or to see this true light. He testifies that the "Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." I Tim. 6:15,16. It is not in the power of man to see, or to make any advance towards seeing this true light. Although by it clearly manifested, exposed, and made manifest to those members of Christ who, in his light, have light, and who, being born of him who is the true light, are the children of the light, and the children of the day, and whose eyes are blessed, and made to see the things which are revealed to them by the Spirit. So the same apostle says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." That light therefore which men have power to approach unto, which has been seen, and can be seen, which can be taught and learned as a science in schools, and comprehended by the mental powers of men, is not the true light into which the Blessed and only Potentate translates his children when he delivers them from the power of darkness. The difference

between a person or thing being lighted, or enlightened, may be illustrated by many scriptural examples. The candles and lamps in the temple were lighted, but not enlightened; for neither candles, nor lamps have power to see; yet the light shines on them, or lightens them. “As the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part,” &c. Luke 17:24. Yet the lightning can only be seen by those who have eyes. While all things are made manifest by the light to those who have the capacity to see, no others are enlightened by it. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, and he said, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” John 12:46. And in the preceding verse he says, “And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.” As he also said to Philip, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” They who see the Father, are enlightened; for he can only be seen in the light of the Son; for no man, knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. Yet the blindness and darkness of all others is exposed and made manifest by this true light. If thine eye be single, or enlightened, the whole body is full of light; for God hath shined in the hearts of his children, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Thus they are enlightened. But if thine eye be evil, the whole body is full of darkness. Such, although made manifest by the true light, are not enlightened by it. “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isa. 8:20. Scribes, pharisees and hypocrites, while concealed in darkness, were regarded as a very pious people; but when the true light came, they were exposed by it. “He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were

evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” John 3:18-21.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1870.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

THE DESIGN AND END OF THE ADVENT OF CHRIST.

A correspondent in Ohio desires our views on John 18:37. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”

And sister F.L. Bagg, of Illinois, has requested our views on John 1:9. “That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” First, as to the light, and then as to *every man* who is lightened.

As in our understanding of them, both passages involve substantially the same doctrine, we propose to embrace what we have to say on them in this article. We will however notice then in the order presented. The Savior of sinners was under arrest, he stood at the bar of Pilate, many grievous charges had been made against him by the Jews, and false witnesses had been bribed to testify against him, that he might be condemned to death. Pilate, who presided as judge, seemed to be greatly perplexed, knowing that it was for envy that the Jews had delivered him, and after a searching investigation could find no fault in him; he was afraid to condemn him, and still more afraid to release him, for fear of offending his murderous persecutors.

Among other questions, Pilate asked Jesus, “Art thou a king then?” To which Jesus replied in the words proposed for consideration. “Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” Our Lord Jesus Christ in his Mediatorial office and work is the only medium of divine revelation. All the secrets of eternity would have remained forever sealed

up from the human family, if the Lion of the tribe of Judah had not prevailed to take the book, and open the seals thereof. No other being was found in heaven, or on earth, or under the earth, that was worthy; every other communication was closed forever. Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. Men by wisdom knew not God. The result of all the speculations of men, in all their vain researches, had utterly failed to find out God, and the wisdom, science and philosophy of men had only demonstrated their total ignorance of the true God and eternal life, while they had filled the world with many thousand idols, and involved the world in pagan darkness and superstition. God had hidden these things from the wise and prudent of the world, because so it seemed good in his sight. But behold, in due time the Messenger of the covenant made his advent to our benighted world, bearing the secrets of eternity, and as the "Faithful and true Witness," proclaimed, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt. 11:27. All the knowledge which the prophets and holy men of old had of spiritual and eternal things, was revealed to them by him, and through him, "For the testimony {or witness} of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:10. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." I Pet. 1:10,11. To this end, and for this cause was Jesus born, and came into the world, to bear witness unto the truth. All that had been testified by his Spirit in the prophets concerning his incarnation, sufferings, and the glory that should follow, would have lacked confirmation, had he not come into the world as it was written of him. He had said by

his prophets in the testimony of his Spirit in them, “Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psa. 40:6, Heb. 19:9. His coming then into the world by a birth, was indispensably necessary to bear witness to the truth of what was written in the volume of God’s book concerning him. But, not only in confirmation of the promise of his coming, but his advent was equally indispensable for the verification of all that was written of him in the law and the prophets, and in the psalms. THE TRUTH, for the demonstration of which he came into the world, embraces the whole economy of grace, of which as the faithful and true witness he testified, is for ever established and irrefutably demonstrated by him, and this testimony includes his life, death, resurrection, and his inauguration as the King of saints, together with all spiritual revelation. He is the way, and the truth, and the life, and no man cometh unto the Father but by him. So vitally important is his witness, or testimony, that no point in the doctrine, order, or ordinances of his kingdom, can be established independently of it. We must have a “Thus saith the Lord” for our faith and practice, if we are his disciples. And to know that we are embraced in his salvation, we must have his Spirit to bear witness with our spirit that we are born of God. It was on no uncertain enterprise, and for the accomplishment of no indefinite work that he came into the word. In his ministry he has identified the truth in his own person, saying, “I am the Truth;” in his word witnessing, Thy word is truth; and in exposing all the hidden things of dishonesty. Now, as the witness which he bears makes the truth of God manifest, and as whatsoever maketh manifest is light, we shall see that the text in John 1:9, proposed by sister Baggs, is in perfect harmony with that on which the foregoing remarks have been written.

“That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” The particular light here designated

as the “true light,” is unquestionably the same which in the fourth verse was in our Lord Jesus Christ. “In him was light, and the light was the life of men.” It is the refulgent brightness of his Father’s glory, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, shining in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ. His brightness, the prophet says, was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power. Hab.3:4. It is the light disclosed by testimony as the witness, faithful and true. The light shining from him as the Sun of Righteousness, which ushered in the gospel day, is the true light, in distinction from all the lights of nature, of reason, or of human science. Although men may denounce it as darkness, for they call all light darkness, and darkness they call light; but to all those in whose hearts God has shined, it is marvelous and true. But what avails the resplendent beams of noon to them that are blind, or dead? The light shines upon the dead and blind as well as upon the living, who have eyes to see and enjoy it. As light maketh manifest, so by the true light every thing is made manifest. This true light reveals to those, who have eyes, all things exactly as they are. The Jews who trusted in their own legal righteousness are exposed by this light. “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin.” John 15:22. Such is the effect of light, it makes manifest that which the darkness concealed. There is a wide difference between lighting and enlightening. Every man that cometh into the world is manifested in his real character by the true light; for it discriminates between life and death, between truth and error, between nature and grace. The sense in which it is said, “That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” cannot be rendered enlightened, without conflicting with the immediate connection. He who is this true light was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. The world then was not enlightened; yet the true state of the world was made manifest by this true light. The

natural sun lightens the natural world, and shines as well upon the blind as on such as can see. It lightens the inanimate as well as the living. The world must be the same world into which the incarnate Word came, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; the same world which was made by him, and yet knew him not. The world by wisdom knew not God. None of the princes of this world knew him; for if they had known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But the light of revelation so shines upon the hidden things of dishonesty as to bring them to light. It shineth in even darkness itself, but the darkness comprehendeth it not. Paul as an apostle, on the throne of judgment, by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, has forever settled the matter of the utter inability of man to approach unto or to see this true light. He testifies that the "Blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." I Tim. 6:15,16. It is not in the power of man to see, or to make any advance towards seeing this true light. Although by it clearly manifested, exposed, and made manifest to those members of Christ who, in his light, have light, and who, being born of him who is the true light, are the children of the light, and the children of the day, and whose eyes are blessed, and made to see the things which are revealed to them by the Spirit. So the same apostle says, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." That light therefore which men have power to approach unto, which has been seen, and can be seen, which can be taught and learned as a science in schools, and comprehended by the mental powers of men, is not the true light into which the Blessed and only Potentate translates his children when he delivers them from the power of darkness. The difference

between a person or thing being lighted, or enlightened, may be illustrated by many scriptural examples. The candles and lamps in the temple were lighted, but not enlightened; for neither candles, nor lamps have power to see; yet the light shines on them, or lightens them. “As the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part,” &c. Luke 17:24. Yet the lightning can only be seen by those who have eyes. While all things are made manifest by the light to those who have the capacity to see, no others are enlightened by it. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Light of the world, and he said, “I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” John 12:46. And in the preceding verse he says, “And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.” As he also said to Philip, “He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.” They who see the Father, are enlightened; for he can only be seen in the light of the Son; for no man, knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. Yet the blindness and darkness of all others is exposed and made manifest by this true light. If thine eye be single, or enlightened, the whole body is full of light; for God hath shined in the hearts of his children, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Thus they are enlightened. But if thine eye be evil, the whole body is full of darkness. Such, although made manifest by the true light, are not enlightened by it. “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isa. 8:20. Scribes, pharisees and hypocrites, while concealed in darkness, were regarded as a very pious people; but when the true light came, they were exposed by it. “He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were

evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” John 3:18-21.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1870.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

DISCIPLINE.

IN answer to queries submitted by brother Spring, on the subject of Gospel Discipline, we would observe that we understand the church of Christ to be an independent body, vested with authority by her king, to execute the order of his house according to the rule of order which he has laid down in the New Testament. To suppose that any case of difficulty could possibly occur, for the disposal of which there is no provision made in the divine rule, would be a reflection on the wisdom of Zion's divine Legislator. The execution of the law of Zion is a *good work,* therefore to it the man of God is thoroughly furnished in the scriptures of truth. In most cases we believe that the rule recorded in Matt. xviii. will apply. But that there are exceptions we think will be seen by a reference to the apostles. See 1 Cor. v. 4, 5, 11-13; 1 Tim. v. 20; Titus iii. 10, 11, and Gal. ii. 5.

In our judgment, all decisions in discipline, whether by majorities or minorities, are null and void if made without a direct warrant in the New Testament; but all decisions, whether made by many or by few, if directly authorized by the word of God, "is bound on earth, and shall be bound in heaven." Such decisions are to be in all cases final and conclusive of course. In the execution of the discipline of the church there is to be no partiality shown to one over another, on account of his or her gifts, age or consequence; for if Thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, or thy hand, or foot, or any of the members; there is but one rule, and the Master says, "It is better to enter into life with one eye, or halt, or maimed, &c., than to retain all these disaffected members to be cast into hell fire;" and that disorder into which a church must be plunged if she is not governed by the divine rule, is by James called the "fire of hell."

These remarks are humbly submitted; the subject is still open, and we solicit the views on this important subject of abler brethren. The brother who submits his queries enquires after the *old paths;* let those who have wisdom point them out.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
July 30, 1834.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 141 – 142

DISCUSSION OF “W.” AND “IOTA.”

WE have copied from the “Jerseyman” a discussion on the subject of Total Abstinence societies, between our old correspondent “W.” and some anonymous writer, whose articles are signed “Iota.” In addition to the well applied arguments of our friend “W,” we will offer a few remarks on the extravagant assumption of “Iota,” that the modern Total Abstinence society has not only been auxiliary to the church, but also instrumental in making a very important improvement in the regions of glory. This assumption will be found in the closing sentence of his second paragraph, on the middle column of page 108, viz:

“Thus the Temperance cause has been auxiliary to the church, and has been blessed as the instrument of diffusing not only happiness and comfort amongst thousands of wretched families, BUT JOY IN HEAVEN OVER SINNERS CONVERTED TO GOD!!!”

However indefinite and vague “Iota’s” idea of a church may be, (for he is unable to inform “W.” which of all the numerous denominations that claim that name is the church to which he has made allusion and to which these modern humanly invented institutions have been assistants or auxiliaries, and whose approval of them is in his estimation more important than what God has revealed in the scriptures) it is very evident that by the term heaven, as he has used it in distinction from its application to what he denominates the church, he means that heaven where the saints shall ultimately surround the throne of God and worship in his presence forever. Of this heaven Christ has informed us that it was prepared for the sheep at his right hand from the foundation of the world. But “Iota” is at issue with the

sovereign Judge of quick and dead upon this point, and thinks heaven now to be undergoing some improvements through the agency of men. If new joys are excited or produced in heaven by the operations of newly invented societies, these new joys must certainly cause a change in the condition of glorified spirits, and the change of condition must be for the better or for the worse; if for the better, heaven was not perfect without them; if otherwise, heaven is imperfect with them. “Iota” is welcome to either horn of the dilemma.

If, as “Iota” supposes, the joys of the saints in glory are regulated by the works and inventions of men, he is willing to ascribe to men a much greater power and control over heaven than he is willing to allow God to have over the affairs of earth. For he asserts that the church (with all the grace given to her) has failed to secure that amount of good which is now effected by the society for which he pleads. We suppose he intends, by the church, the church of God; but he is mistaken in regard to what constitutes the church of God, and applies the term to self-organized bodies, which are assisted by such auxiliaries as Total Abstinence societies. But the church of God leans only on the arm of her Beloved. The Lord alone is her help and the strength of her salvation. In his inability to comprehend the church of God, “Iota” is not alone, for it is written, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Should it ever be the happy lot of “Iota” to experience this gracious work, he will see the kingdom, and know that it is not composed of flesh and blood, of meats and drinks, but righteousness and peace and joy, (not in what men are doing) in the Holy Ghost.

To the demands of “W.” for scriptural authority to sustain the institution, “Iota” appeals to established opinions and sanction of the christian church, and that of the wise and good for many years; and the sweeping charges that the

popular benevolent institutions of the day are schemes and inventions of men, rather than injunctions of the Redeemer, are of such a nature as to forbid a reply from “Iota.” But what does “Iota” discover in “W’s.” rejection of any authority short of the scriptures, for the establishment of religious institutions which contemplate the essential improvement of heaven and earth, that so much shocks him as to forbid that he should reply? Perhaps “Iota” is unaccustomed to asking for, or giving scriptural precepts and examples for religious practices; but even in that case, if he can lay his finger on any portion of the divine record showing that the benevolent institutions of the day, as he calls them, are the injunctions of the Redeemers ought he not for the information of others who have read the discussion to do so! If these institutions are enjoined by the Redeemer, such injunctions must be found among his laws in the scriptures; and if not enjoined in the scriptures, they are the inventions of men or devils. *Iota* is forbidden to reply, much in the manner in which some of his ancient brotherhood were forbidden or unable to reply to the question whether the baptism of John was from heaven or of men. They could not tell without exposing their own guilt. If they said, Of heaven, they were convicted of opposition to an ordinance of God; but if they said, *Of men*, they feared the people: therefore they said, as “Iota” virtually says, We cannot tell. Who is so stupid as to suppose for one moment that “Iota” would slip off in this pitiful manner if it was in his power to bring the least countenance from the bible in support of his favorite idols?

“Iota” charges “W.” with leaving the grounds on which they joined issue: but this is a mere quibble; its utter destitution of justice will be seen by all who read the discussion. But if “Iota” really wishes publicly to discuss the question whether a professed christian can consistently with that profession join what is called a “Temperance” society, and will abide the

decision of the word of God, let him appoint time and place, and he shall not want for a man to take the negative.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
July 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 293 – 296

DISTRICT SCHOOL SYSTEM IN NEW YORK.

THERE are some indications of a near approach of "perilous times" for those who adhere strictly to the doctrine and precepts of the gospel as the rule of their faith and practice. The cloud has, for some time past, been gathering darkly and densely above and around us, and now seems almost ready to burst upon us in dreadful fury; its murmuring thunders are beginning to be more and more distinctly heard, and its vivid lightnings to flash fearfully in our eyes.

We cannot do justice to the subject under consideration, without touching upon subjects which beat affinity to the political concerns of our country, but in their political bearings we shall not discuss them. Men of diversified and conflicting political connections and creeds are alike involved, as actors in these movements, which we believe deeply concern the vital interests of the Sion of God. The insatiable greedíness of the popular fanatics of modern times, to seize and make religious stock of every thing which by fraud or force comes within their grasp, has received some attention in former articles published in this paper. Would to heaven the story had already been fully told, and we had nothing to add to the records already made; but every revolution of the wheel of time develops some new display of the workings of the man of sin, the son of perdition, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness in them that perish. Our state was considerably agitated not long since upon the subject of our common district schools, and memorials were poured in upon our legislature by wholesale, praying for legislative protection from the Catholic influence, which Protestant religionists apprehended our schools were threatened with. Laws were

finally passed to reject from our schools sectarian books, &c., all having in view to answer the desires of petitioners, but to the great dissatisfaction of the Catholic citizens of our country. Every intelligent disciple of Jesus, and every well-wisher of our republican institutions, must see the propriety of separating sectarian religious influence from our common schools; the christian knows that the things of the Spirit of God can only be taught by the Holy Ghost, and the enlightened statesman knows that it is anti-republican, and subversive of rights guaranteed to every citizen to make our common schools the channel through which to communicate sectarian religious influence to and upon the unsuspecting minds of our children. But instead of being satisfied with the provisions of the law to disconnect the schools from sectarian influence, those who were so loud and zealous in crying out against Catholic influence, are now as busily engaged to convert our school system into an engine of intolerance, and to make them subserve their sectarian purposes, as though they had been blind and passive iii regard to the Catholics. But if chains of dire oppression are to clank around our necks, what will be the difference to Old School Baptists whether they be forged by a Catholic or Protestant smith? There is at this day scarcely a standard book in common use in our district schools that is not strongly impregnated with sectarian doctrines, and these doctrines are so interwoven with all the elementary studies in our schools, that we must relinquish our right to a share of the School Fund, or suffer our children to drink in the poisoned draught. If the old Westminster or the Episcopalian catechisms are not now taught generally in. our schools, such lessons as they have falsely called “the apostles’ creed,” “forms of prayer,” with “grace before meat,” and “grace after meat,” with a large assortment of “Now I lay me down to sleep,” &c., all of which has a direct tendency to lead the pupil to believe, with such sectarians as hold the heresy, that they are capable, in their unregenerate state, to offer prayers and devotional exercises

to their Creator which he will regard with approbation. These may be considered trivial matters; but are not these instructions in the very face of what God has said in the volume of divine revelation? And is it a light matter to tax the people of America to support schools in which is taught that which every soul that has been taught of God knows to be in plain. contradiction of his word and Spirit?

In connection with the foregoing remarks, would it be unpardonable for us to inquire into the propriety of robbing the common school fund, to pay large sums from it annually to literary and theological colleges for the training up amongst us of a political and religious aristocracy? Have not the Catholic citizens of our states the same right to complain of appropriations to support Protestant sectarianism, as the Protestants had in the opposite case? None can more unqualifiedly deprecate the heresies of Catholicism than we do; but we equally loathe the same heresies among Protestants. If we must be sacrificed, it is of very little consequence to us who shall be the executioner.

In the present organization of our district school system, we have a state superintendent, anti county and town superintendents, amounting to a "standing army," to be fed out of our school fund, and, as we intend presently to show, to be used as pliant tools in the hands of religious fanatics and clerical demagogues for the removal of the battlements of our civil and religious rights; and besides these, a code of laws sufficiently ample for the government of a state, and so complicated as to require an attorney in each district to expound them.

The process by which all this machinery can he attached to the popular car of religious speculation, is simple and easy. A periodical publication, called the *District School Journal*, is attached to the system, ostensibly, for the purpose of

publishing the laws in relation to schools, but in reality embracing the belchings forth of the anti-christian and anti-republican doctrines of the rulers of the darkness of this world. One district in this town has been recently informed by Samuel Young, Secretary of State, and Superintendent of Common Schools, &c., that he had appropriated six thousand dollars annually for copies of this "District School Journal" to be sent to every district in our State; and that the clerk or trustees of each district were by law required, under the penalty of heavy fines, to pay the postage, take from their post office, carefully preserve, and at the end of each volume cause them to be bound and placed in the school library, and that they were authorized by law to reimburse the expense by taxing the inhabitants of their respective districts for the amount. To show what the people are to be legally taxed, and compelled to pray for, we copy the following extracts from the "District School Journal," vol. ii. page 42, which may serve as a specimen:

"It cannot be denied that the influence of private select schools has been found to be injurious to the reputation and patronage of our common schools. But in a free country like this, where enterprise and talents are encouraged, and where every individual seeks a fair compensation for his labor, no one can fairly object to the establishment of private schools; nor can any be censured as anti-republicans for the encouragement of these, if suitable public provision is not made for a safe and thorough training of children in the district schools; and especially since religious and moral culture has been so generally excluded from the latter, through sectarian jealousies or infidel opposition. In the purer days of New England, when her clergymen visited the schools and afforded them the encouragement of their presence and counsels, they flourished and were respectable. But long since, the people, not in New England only, but generally through the United States, have contracted such an

apprehension of danger from clerical influence, that no minister of the gospel feels at ease in crossing the threshold of a common school, lest some bigoted sectarian, errorist, or infidel, should slander him, as prosecuting some sectarian enterprise. Hence, unfortunately for the interest of common schools, some of their best friends, those who feel as deeply as any for the welfare of children and youth, whose professional duty is to train the immortal mind to pure and elevated action, are excluded from rendering that aid which experience has shown to be almost indispensably necessary to the prosperity of the common school. * * * * *

"To secure these results in a high degree, he (the teacher) should enter into, and practice the saying of Dr. Dwight, 'he that makes a little child happier for half an hour is a co-worker with God.' It has also been remarked, that no one can be happy as a teacher who is not prepared to devote all his powers to the performance of his duties. Fellenburg does not ask too much in requiring 'a vigilance that never sleeps, a perseverance that never tires.' The motto of Luther, 'work on earth, and rest in heaven,' must be the motto of every faithful schoolmaster, and he who is not prepared to live and act in this spirit, had better leave the service to warmer hearts and nobler minds. He should teach, not for pecuniary reward chiefly, but for usefulness."

These extracts are from part of an address delivered by J. R. Boyd, Principal of Black River Literary and Religious Institution. The speaker in the above extract charges our misgivings to jealousy, &c., but is there no cause for jealousy when we discover so much union of interest between the clergy and the statesman? The clergy can make the politician popular, if the politician will reciprocate the favor; the former will manage the ballot box by their influence, if the latter will cause their will to be done in the legislature. To enable them to make good this sort of contract or covenant it becomes

the designing politician to give the clergy as free access as possible to our schools, and to all the fountains of intellectual training – and as far as possible contribute to their popular influence. It has always been the settled maxim of all who deserve the name of Christians, that the religion of Jesus Christ require nothing from the rulers of the earth, but simply to be let alone.

While the Legislature of our State is already, to some extent at least, committed on the subject of appropriating the people's money without their consent, and in the face of the constitution, to the patronage of religions interests, and that, too, in a manner eminently calculated to elevate the arminian, or work-mongrel sects at the expense, and to the direct oppression of those who are governed in their faith and practice alone by the scriptures, the Congress of our nation is called upon gravely, to pass laws which would, if passed, extinguish the last spark of our boasted religious liberty, prostrate to the dust the fair fabric of independence, and build up an hierarchal despotism upon their ruin. Hierarchy and monarchy are limbs of the same beast, and always go together; none can ask for the former without desiring the latter. The petition presented to the House of Representatives, on the eleventh ult., by Hon. J. Q. Adams, from citizens of Illinois, embraces the following, as stated by Mr. Adams himself, viz : First, "Praying that Congress would pass some law confessing our national sins." Some laughter was excited, whereupon Mr. A. said: "Sir, this petition comes from two hundred and twenty-six respectable people of Illinois. It is no idle paper, and ought to be treated with respect." The second prayer was, that Congress would pass a law acknowledging the dominion of Jesus Christ! The third prayer was, that Congress should pass a law defining what the law of God is: and the fourth prayer was, for such amendment of the constitution as would secure to all the people of the United States the self-evident truths of the

declaration of independence – the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

If our Congress should attempt to define, by enactment, the law of God, would they not also be required to provide some law to enforce obedience to the law of God according to the definition so established? And how could this be done, without stoning to death the offender. Are the citizens of Illinois prepared to be circumcised, and to engage in the performance of all the precepts which were once obligatory upon the nation of Israel, and which were never adapted to, nor by divine authority enjoined upon any of the Gentile nations of the earth? Can the legislatures of our States, or of our nation, define to us the relationship between us as creatures and God as our Creator, and the necessary obligations devolving upon us, without lording it over the consciences of a very large portion of the citizens whom they represent, and from whom they have derived their power for other purposes Is our legislature composed of men, who, from their experimental knowledge of God, are more competent to define divine things, than others are? The kingdom of Jesus Christ is a spiritual kingdom; it is not of this world, and the King has taught his subjects to acknowledge his dominion in such language as this, viz: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and The glory, forever, Amen." We cannot say the kingdom is Christ's and the power belongs to Congress. Congress has been harrassed for years past to define to us the law of God in part, if not in full: it has been called upon to define a Sabbath day, and to establish by law the religious opinions of a portion of the citizens of our country, and compel a compliance on the par of others at the edge of the sword.

One remark more and we will dismiss this subject for the present. This loathing of freedom and of the civil and religious rights of mankind, and this sighing after hierarchy,

despotism and bloodshed, (for bloodshed is involved in the petition) was never heard of from the settlers of our western states, until they had been corrupted by the influence of modern missionaries; and the whole fanatical movement in Illinois, may, in our candid Opinion, justly be charged to the spirit and doctrines of modern missionists.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
January 15, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 382 - 389

DIVIDING THE SPOIL WITH THE STRONG.

Brother William Hamner makes the following request:

“As I have never asked your views, I think I can ask them now without being thought troublesome. Please give your views on Isaiah liii. 12, especially on the clause, “And he shall divide the spoil with the strong.”

Respectfully,
INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

REPLY. – None, we presume, will dispute that our Lord Jesus Christ is the person of whom this prediction was made, and to whom the promise in the prediction relates, as the description of him and of his Mediatorial work is so clearly given in the chapter. He who at his coming in the flesh “was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” “He who hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.” Who “was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities;” and on whom was laid the chastisement of our peace, and with whose stripes we are healed. “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter: and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of

the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." "Therefore," (for and in consideration of all this,) "will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong."

These positive promises are made by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to him who in the eternal Godhead is one and identical with the Father, and in his to begotten Sonship is the Mediatorial Head and Redeemer of his body, the church, and holding the relation of Son and Righteous Servant of the Father.

The "portion" divided unto him out of the whole mass of mankind comprises all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. – Acts ii. 39. For when the Most High divided the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. "For the Lord's portion" (in this division of the sons of Adam) "is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." – Deut. xxxii. 8, 9. Of this portion divided to the Son of God, Jesus says to his Father, in John xvii., "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest to me out of the world; thine they were, and of gavest them me." "I pray for them whom thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them" "They are not of the world, even as im not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." Of this portion which is Father has divided to him, he says, John x. 29, 30, "My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one."

“And he shall divide the spoil with the strong.” Spoil, in a scriptural sense of the word, means the trophies of victory; and in the dividing of the spoil we are to consider what they are, what powers were overcome, and what were the trophies of our Redeemer’s victory when he poured out his soul unto death, and rose in triumph from the dead, and how and with whom the spoil was divided. We are told that our Savior “spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shall of them openly.” – Col. ii. 15. In the same chapter, and in connection with the last text referred to, we are told that he spoiled the principality of the ceremonial law of its hand-writing of ordinances, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. The spoil he divided with his redeemed members, who henceforth are made free from the law by the body of Christ, and subject no longer to be judged in meats, drinks, new moons are sabbath days, but are admonished two “stand fast and the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free;” for our triumphant Redeemer, who in the day of his flesh was himself subject to the law, is now in his resurrection glory manifestly the Head of all principality and power. Sin also, which hath reigned unto death, the strength of which is the law, is spoiled of this dominion over the redeemed vessels of mercy. “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.” – Rom. vi. 14. The death is also a principality and power, as it has reigned. That through death Jesus has destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, and verified the prophecy, “O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.” – Hosea xiii. 14. Death is despoiled of its sting, and the grave of the two victory. Sin and death are spoiled of their prisoners, over whom they held dominion. The prey is taken from the mighty, and the lawful captives are delivered, in the redemption which Christ accomplished, and the triumph which he has achieved. “Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free.” And he has obtained eternal

redemption for that portion of the sons of Adam which the Father has divided unto him.

"And he shall divide the spoil with the strong." Not with the vanquished principalities which he has led captive; for strong as they were to hold his people captive, despite having the power they had in themselves, they could not vie with him whom God had made strong for himself. Brother Boydston will pardon us for differing with him, in supposing that the spoils of Christ's victory in bearing the sins of many and making intercession for the transgressors, was divided with Satan. While it is true that Jesus shall separate the nations as a shepherd separates his sheep from the goats, and that the work is now being accomplished, according to the parable in Matthew xxv., as our brother has said in his excellent communication in the first number of the present volume of the SIGNS, we can not think that any of the spoils of our Redeemer's deathless victory shall ever be consigned to the place prepared for the devil and his angels. Great victories were often expressed in the Old Testament by the dividing of the spoil with illustrious characters; and the expression is not inappropriately applied to the triumph of our Redeemer. He has divided the spoil with the divine law, under which he suffered, in that he has magnified it and made it honorable. The strength of the law of god may be inferred from the fact that heaven and earth shall pass away, but no jot or tittle of it shall fail and to all was fulfilled. The honor of the law was sustained as a trophy of his victory. All the perfections of Deity shared in the spoil which he divided with the strong. The truth of God was verified, and his justice was sustained. His wisdom, power, grace, mercy and love, and his immutability, all were honored, and the glory of God was magnified, when Jesus poured out his soul unto death, and rose in triumph from the grave. Because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the

transgressors, and bore the sins of many, and made intercessions for the transgressors.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 2.
January 15, 1881

DIVINITY AND HUMANITY OF OUR LORD.

Indiana Creek, Iowa, Sept. 9, 1856.

Friend Beebe: Will you please give your views through the Signs, on the divinity and humanity of Christ? Should you comply with my request, you will oblige,
AN INQUIRER AFTER TRUTH.

The terms divinity, and humanity, which are in much use among theologians, are not used in reference to Christ, by the inspired writers; we must therefore, take them in the theological sense in which they are commonly used. By the divinity of Christ, so far as we can learn, is generally intended his independent, eternal Godhead, and by his humanity, that body of flesh and blood in which he became incarnate, which was made of a woman, made under the law, &c. We have been engaged for many years in trying to exhibit our views of the blessed Redeemer, in reference to his Godhead, his manhood, and also in his mediatorial identity as the Head and Life of his body, the church. But after all that has been said and written on the subject, we have yet to say, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh," &c. So absolutely is he God, that all the angels are commanded to worship him, and so truly was he man, that he could be born of a virgin, cradled in a manger, grow in stature to manhood, hunger, thirst, be weary, and his soul could be exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death; could feel the infirmities of his people, groan in spirit, and sweat, as it were, great drops of blood; yea, he could die upon the cross, and be buried, and finally be raised again from the dead, by the glory of the Father, and ascend up into heaven. As God, he is one with the Father, independent, self-existent and almighty. By him all things

were made that were made, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist. As man, he could be tempted in all points like his brethren, and yet remain uncontaminated by sin. None can deny his essential, eternal and unbegotten Godhead, and consistently hold that he is a Savior, for he says by the prophet, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." If, then, he is a Savior, he is also God. In his incarnation he took part of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of. The propriety of calling his Godhead, divinity, or his manhood, humanity, we will leave others to decide; we prefer, when treating on a subject so awfully sacred, to use only such adjectives as the Scriptures furnish. Peter speaks of the divine nature, but as he also speaks of the saints being partakers of it, we have supposed that the mediatorial fullness of which John also speaks (John i. 14,16,) was intended. Brethren must read and judge for themselves, but we do not feel prepared to say that the life and immortality, which Christ gives to his saints, is anything short of divine nature, while the Scriptures plainly teach that the essential attributes of eternal Godhead are peculiar to the Godhead, and incommunicable to any inferior beings. On the other hand, we dare not say that that perfect, mystical body, or stature, which comprehends the Head and body of the church, was only human.

We may not have comprehended the design of "An Inquirer after Truth," but we have briefly stated some of our views on the subject, according to the very limited light we have of that Savior whom we desire to worship, adore and trust as the God of our salvation, who came in the flesh, and was found in fashion as a man, but we do most heartily say,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee:
Leave, ah leave me not alone,
All my help must come from thee."

No couplet in the celebrated stanzas of Watts has ever afforded more sweetness to us than these,

"Jesus, my God, I know his name.
His name is all my trust."

We have neither the time nor space to extend our remarks at this time. May the subject be opened gloriously by the Holy Spirit, to the understanding, joy and rejoicing of all the saints, for the Redeemer's sake.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 377 - 378

DUTY OF DEACONS

Brother Beebe: If one so unworthy as I feel may so address you, I desire your views on the duty of deacons. Our Association (Salem) has requested the churches of which she is composed to take up the subject, and set forth their views on the subject. Please give your views in as plain a way as possible, and you may confer a great favor on many of the Baptists in Southern Indiana as well as elsewhere. Please reply as early as you can, through your valuable, and to me, highly esteemed paper, the *Signs of the Times.*

I would also like to have your views on 1 Peter i, 22, particularly on the first part of the verse. I would like to write much; but, my dear brother, from a sense of my inability to write to edification, I refrain. May the good Lord bless you and me, and all the Israel of God, with all needful blessings while we sojourn in this unfriendly world, and finally crown us in heaven with all his blood-washed throng, that we may glorify and praise him in a world without end.

GEORGE FEITENGER

Reply: This letter having been mislaid, we have no means of knowing how long it has been on hand, as our brother neglected to date it. Our reply may be too late for his purpose, but as we have no special light to communicate on the *duty of deacons,* his loss will be small from our delay.

We have positive instructions in the Epistles of Paul, that the office of deacons belongs to the order of the gospel church; and of their character and qualifications we are very fully instructed, especially in 1 Tim. iii. 8-13; but the particular work is not so clearly defined. Many believe that the seven which were set apart to serve tables, Acts vi. 3-8, were *deacons;* if their exposition be correct, (and we will not

controvert it) we may infer that their work is first to attend to the poor of the church, and see that the supplies provided by the church are faithfully applied for the relief of the needy. And as they were to relieve the administrators of the work from embarrassment, so that they might give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. That the ministers of the word need such aid and relief now as much as it was required in the apostles' days, is very evident; as the number of gospel ministers is small, and many of the few who stand approved by the churches are greatly hindered in the work, by pecuniary embarrassments, so that they cannot give themselves continually to the word of the ministry, without violating other precepts, which require them to provide for their households, etc. The minister of the word, in pursuing his holy vocation, becomes familiar with the necessities of the saints, and their wants are to be attended to. How dwells the love of God in those who see their brethren and sisters in need, and shut up the bowels of their compassion, etc.? See I John iii. 17, James ii. 15, 16. But if the administrators of the word have to make collections for the poor, and see to the appropriation of the contributions, they must necessarily neglect the administration of the word. Hence, there seems to be a necessity for men of *honest report* to take this responsibility. If they lack the qualifications which Paul requires of deacons, they cannot well fulfill the duties assigned them; those who contribute must have confidence in the honesty, integrity, and faithfulness of the officer who is put in charge of the work. We are not directly told that the seven men which were set apart by order of the apostles, Acts vi. 3-8, were deacons, but the similarity of their qualifications to those required of deacons in 1 Tim. iii. 8-13, is a strong presumptive evidence that they were. A second evidence is found in the fact that we have none but deacons now in the church to perform that work, and further, there being no specific work assigned the deacons, in Paul's instructions to Timothy, strongly favors the

conclusion that the work assigned the seven in Acts vi. 3-8, was well understood by Timothy and the churches as being the work of deacons.

Men who possess the qualifications which Paul requires of deacons, being grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, etc. Such men, it is presumed, will find enough to do in the church of God; not only in looking to the relief of the poor, and seeing that the ministry is relieved from pecuniary embarrassments; but as Paul requires that he shall be a good disciplinarian, ruling well his own house, we infer that he is to be of much service in the church, in seeing to the strict observance of all the laws of Christ, aiding the pastor in the oversight of the flock, and in attending faithfully to all that belongs to the order of the gospel. Especially when the administrator of the word and ordinances is called away, (for their time has to be divided, as was the time of the apostles among the churches) to see that the assembling of the saints is not neglected - that the regular meetings be kept up, and the gifts of the saints called out and exercised, and that the saints speak to themselves in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs - that they exhort, admonish and edify one another. They should make themselves familiar with the situation of the members generally; see that there be no strife, contentions, envies, or disorders among them, - visit the sick and afflicted, and make known to the church the case of such as require their aid. If these are not some of the duties of the deacon, we should not be able to enlighten our enquiring brother.

Our views on the text, I Peter i. 22, we will endeavor to give soon.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1861

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 499 - 502

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH.

DOCTOR N. Kendrick, of Hamilton Literary and Theological College, says in a late number of the New York *Recorder*, that, "The last command of the Savior makes it the duty of his church to publish the gospel among all nations." Will the Doctor inform us through the same organ, or any other which may suit him better, when this last command was issued, and the precise words in which it was expressed?

As Old School Baptists we have very little claim on the Doctor, and we would not trouble him on a matter of minor importance; but if the Savior has given such a command as the Doctor represents, it is highly important that the church should be put in possession of the fact at the Doctor's earliest leisure.

We find no such command in the New Testament, nor were we aware that he had given any of the kind since his ascension to glory. Besides we think it must be new to the Doctor himself, for some ten years ago the Doctor called on us and stated that he was on a tour through the southern tier of counties of this State, soliciting aid for the New York Baptist Education Society, &c. We assured him that the people would show from the scriptures any direct authority for Education Societies for preparing young men for the ministry, we would become responsible for $500 to go to that purpose. At that time the Doctor could find no such command. The Doctor will please inform us of the date of this "last command," and whether the new order or command is to supercede the old command in which Christ gave the commission to the apostle to "Go and teach all nations," &c?

Without designing any offence, we are unable to rely upon his assertion, for we know that no such command could be given to the church, without a radical revolution of that order

which was established more than eighteen hundred years ago. Then instead of commanding the church to publish his gospel, he called whomsoever he would, and commanded them to go and preach his gospel, and at the same time commanded the saints, and thereby made it the duty and privilege of the church to "pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest." Moreover he has given gifts unto men; he has given "some prophets, some apostles, and some pastors and teachers," &c. And the very last command which he gave before his ascension to glory was given to his eleven apostles in these words: "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." – Luke xxiv. 49. Can it be possible that the learned Doctor finds the duty of which he speaks in this command? Certainly not. It would require a Doctor of extaordinary ingenuity to make this command read, "But tarry ye at Hamilton College, until the professors of that institution shall grant your diploma; or until the church shall call you out." The ministers of Christ, we are authorized by his last command to believe, are to be endued from on high, and none but such have any right to publish the gospel to the nations of the earth; all others are imposters, and Christ has made it, by his express command, the duty of his church to "Beware of them."

The balance of the article is a deduction from a false position, in which the Doctor infers that the church is bound to contribute money to sustain the New York Education Society, but as the position is false the deduction cannot be true.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
February 1, 1847

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 747 – 748

DWELLING PLACE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God." – Psa. xc. 1, 2.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God: in him will I Trust." – Psa. xci. 1, 2.

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal and the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desire and to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in *this* tabernacle dew groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing the his God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore *we are* always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (for we walk by faith, not by sight.)" – 2 Cor. v. 1-7.

In the unfathomable depths of eternity, before the mountains were brought forth, or the earth or the world was formed, or earth's foundation had been laid, the spiritual life and immortality of all the saints was hidden with Christ, in God, in the secret place of the Most High. That Adam, which is the antitype of the earthy Adam, and who is the Lord from heaven, was that dwelling place of all his members which

compose his mystical body, the Psalmist positively testifies; and that he has been our dwelling place, not only in all generations, that even from everlasting. And the inspired apostle Paul informs us that the Lord from heaven, the same Lord in whom our life was hid in God, is the second or antitypical Adam. The apostle John, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, proclaims to us the record of the eternal word, as borne by the sacred three, the Father, Word and Holy Ghost, that bear record in heaven, saying, "This is the record, that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son." Not prospectively, to be our dwelling place at some future time; but in him, *actually*or really, even from everlasting and to everlasting. And this record from the archives of eternity is also confirmed to us by the three that bear witness on earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one, confirming to our faith the witness of God upon this vitally important subject. Thus showing that Christ, who is the Lord from heaven, in whom, as the secret place of the Most High, this gift of God which is eternal life is hidden, and in whom it dwelt from everlasting, is, and was, and forever shall continue to be, one with all his members, even as he and the eternal Father are one. As he is one with the Father and the supreme Godhead, even so are his people one with him in his Mediatorial Sonship. The head of the churches Christ, and the head of Christ as God. As the Son is identified with and dwells in the Father, and the Father dwells in him, even so the eternal life of the church dwells in Christ, and Christ dwells in all his spiritual members. We say his spiritual members, as we do not understand that he dwells in them experimentally and manifestly here in the flesh until he is formed in them the hope of glory. The union of Christ and the church, of which we are speaking, is a spiritual, and consequently a vital, union; a union of life eternal, and not of flesh and blood. For although he did, when the fullness of time was come, take part of the flesh and blood of which his children are partakers, and thus identified himself with them

in their flesh, and was made under the law which they had in their earthly nature transgressed, to redeem them from all iniquities, yet it is not that union of which we are now speaking, for that union was not eternal. It was not manifested until the fullness of time had come, and then, but not until then, was he made flesh; and now that he has been put to death in the flesh, and raise from the dead by the glory of the Father, we know him no more after the flesh. But the eternal life in which the head and body are in eternal union, is after the order of Melchisedec, without beginning of days or end of life.

Our earthly life had a beginning, and must have an end. It was created and given to us in the earthy Adam, and hid in him from the time of his creation until it was manifested by natural generation by a fleshly birth; but our eternal life, in which we are one with the Son of God, is as eternal as his Mediatorial Sonship, and will in him before ever he had formed the earth or the world, even from everlasting to everlasting. The dwelling place is respectively of our earthly in heavenly life, are very clearly distinguished one from the other in the scriptures which we have copied at the head of this article. The first and development in the order of time, or that we have any consciousness of, is called “our earthly house of this tabernacle,” and is spoken of as a temporary dwelling place, destined to be dissolved. We can easily understand that these earthly or fleshly bodies, which are born of the flesh, are to be dissolved by death; as the Lord God said unto Adam, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” For nearly six thousand years our natural life, which was hidden in the first Adam, which is of the earth, earthy, dwelt, before we who are now on the earth were born of the flesh. Our birth of the flesh did manifest, that did not constitute, our relation to the earthy Adam; for if we had not been in him from the beginning, we could not have sinned and fell in him. It is not by any new creation that we are

brought into manifestation. Death passed upon all man when Adam sinned, *for that all had* sinned; and this was before any of Adam's progeny were born. Thousands of years before we were born of the flesh, God commanded that Adam should "multiply and replenish the earth." All who are born of the flesh are but the multiplication of what was originally created in and called Adam; and as one generation of the earthy man Adam dies, another succeeds to replenish the earth of which man is formed. As the oak only develops the acorn, the branches the vine, without changing its nature, so when Adam all that dwell in him die; for he as our earthly dwelling must dissolve, for death has passed on all in him. If we carefully observed the apostle's arguments preceding 2 Corinthians v., we will find him speaking of the two natures developed in the saints while in the flesh; and he says the God hath shined in our hearts, to give this the light of the knowledge of and glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. "But," he adds, "we have this treasure [of light, which is life, – John i. 4] in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." It is not our hearts that shine, but God shines in them. When Christ, who is the true light, is formed in us the hope of glory, the body is still dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. Those earthen vessels, or earthly houses, to whom this treasure of light and life is committed, "are troubled on every side," &c. "For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake." But why? "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." The light and refulgent glory of Christ's supreme radiance was mantled by the vail of his flesh, until he for the joy which was sent before him endured the cross. For it behooved him to suffer, and then to enter into his glory. In his flesh Jesus was a sufferer, from his assumption of our flesh until his death upon the cross; but in his resurrection the vail is rent, and forever removed. He is now glorified with his Father's own self, with that glory which she had with the Father before the world

was. – John xvii. 5. As it behooved Jesus to die in rise from the dead to unvail the eternal majesty of his Godhead, so his members who were now dwelling in the earthly house of their pilgrimage are delivered unto the mortality of the flesh, that they also may arise from the dead in spiritual, immortal bodies, changed from mortal to immortal, from natural to spiritual, from earthly to heavenly bodies, that the life of Jesus may be revealed in them, without a vail between, that the Glory which the Father has given him, and the superlative glory of his resurrection and exultation, maybe witnessed and enjoyed also by them. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and presented us with you." "For which cause we fain not; but though I were outward man perish," or shall be dissolved in death, "yet the inward man," which is in the earthly vessel or house, "is renewed day by day." "For we know that if this earthly house [outward man, or earthen vessel] were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands," on which death hath not passed, because it is "eternal in the heavens." Can there be any doubt the Adam, or our Adamic nature, which was created and sinned and fell in Adam, and which was redeemed by Christ, and which is to be changed, and fashioned like Christ's glorious resurrected body, is the earthly house of are tabernacle? Or can there be any doubt that our house which is from heaven his Christ, the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven? What other house is there from heaven the Christ? Do we not groan, being burdened while in this earthly cage? Are we not longing to be clothed upon, and to dwell experimentally in Christ? And have we not found to our sorrow that when we are absorbed in the concerns of this are three state, and are at home in the Adamic house, we are (in our enjoyments and communion) absent from the lord? But when abiding in Christ, as the branch of by death and the vine, we are absent from and forgetful of the body. When caught up by the spirit to the paradise of our God, like Paul, we are on conscious of

and by the spirit which they receive in the new birth the redeemed persons are sealed unto the day of redemption, or deliverance from the bondage of corruption, and unto the full enjoyment of their house which is from heaven. For “He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the cap spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the lord; (for we walk by faith, not by sight).” We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and the present with the lord.

“We walk by faith of joys to come,
Faith lives upon thy word;
But while the body is our home,
We’re absent from the Lord.

“To his pleasant to believe thy grace,
But we would rather see;
And we would be absent from the flesh,
And present, Lord, with thee.”

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times,
Volume 48, No. 12
June 15, 1880.

being in or out of the body. As the house of Abraham, the house of Israel, the house of David, when spoken of in the scriptures, includes their households, their families, so the term is figuratively applied to the first and second Adams respectively; the first in manifestation in time is earthy, the second is heavenly; the first is mortal and must be dissolved, the second is eternal and the heavens. As by the offense of the one, many were made sinners, so by the righteousness of the other many are made righteous; and as in the one we all die, even so in the other shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

How consoling to the way-worn pilgrims, while subject to the opposition, infirmities, pains, groans and deadly strife which we must endure while here in this earthly house of our tabernacle, while we feel the earthly walls trembling, and bearing the unmistakable evidences of decay in dissolution, to know that when it shall be laid low in death, we have a indissoluble building of God in the secret place of the Most High, and under the shadow of the Almighty, which has been that dwelling place of the life and immortality of all the members of the body of Christ which were chosen in him, and in him as their eternal dwelling place blessed with all spiritual blessings from everlasting to everlasting. The earthly house, which is the Adamic nature, must be dissolved in death; but the divine nature of which all the saints are made partakers his indissoluble. That eternal life which the apostle John says "was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," and which the eternal record of heaven assures us was given to us in the Son of God, and which is hid with Christ in God in the secret place of the Most High, forever has and eternally will of vied in him. And all the saints redeemed from the earth, out of all the tribes of mankind, receive in their new birth the first fruits of the spirit of life and immortality which was given them in him before the foundation of the world;

ECCLESIASTES IV. 1.

“So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.”

In this book of the words of the wise man, Solomon preaches the vanity of all things under the sun; or, of all earthly things, and having considered them, one by one, has by that wisdom with which he was especially inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, pronounced them all vanity and vexation of spirit. And the truth of his preaching is witnessed by all those whom God has made wise unto salvation. No amount of earthly possessions can secure happiness, as will appear from the parable of the rich man, who proposed to pull down his barns and build larger, when on the very eve of his aniticipated ease and pleasure, his soul was required of him. Poverty also has its inconveniences and perplexities; and when all is accurately summed up, the full amount is vanity. Yet it is in the earthly nature of mankind to “Stretch their arms like seas, and grasp in all the shore.” To the enlightened child of God all things below the sun are vanity; and all earthly things are a vexation to that spirit which is born of God; which is called the new or inner man; and whose conversation or citizenship is in heaven. Although the things below the sun may feed and nourish our fleshly nature, that very flesh which lives on earthly sustenance is a vanity and vexation to the heaven-born spirit. And that spiritual life which feeds on immortal bread, lives on Christ, by living faith, eats his flesh and drinks his blood, can find no comforter under the sun, no food, no consolation or spiritual enjoyment from earthly or sensual things.

“So I returned,” that is from the pursuit and contemplation of other objects, “and considered the oppressions that are done under the sun.” Literally the world is full of oppressions, and we see the oppressed bearing the yoke. In our favored land, where we have the most liberal and by far the best form of government under the sun, still we find oppression. The strong oppress the weak; the rich too often oppress the poor; the wise and cunning oppress the weak and simple, while the oppressors are themselves oppressed in turn, by that which inflicts on them care, toil and labor. Anti-Christ oppresses the children of God, and has drenched the earth with the blood of the saints, so that in the world, or under the sun, the saints must have tribulation. They are a poor, oppressed and afflicted people, who trust in nothing under the sun; they trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God.

“And behold the tears of such as were oppressed.” The bitter tears wrung from the streaming eyes of the widows, the fatherless, the poor, the injured, the robbed and the spoiled, among men in nature, as well as the peculiar trials, and flowing tears of the oppressed, persecuted and afflicted saints, are a witness of the correctness of the wise man’s conclusion, that all below the sun is vanity, and vexation of spirit.

“And they [the oppressed] had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter.” Can this be said of the saints of God? It is true God’s people have a holy and heavenly Comforter. “Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive.” But that Comfoiter is the Holy Ghost; is God himself, and their comforts are spiritual and divine. The wise man does not speak of things above; but of things which are under the sun. The comforts of the oppressed saints are above the sun; they are blessed with all spiritual blessings in *heavenly,* not

in *earthly*places, in Christ Jesus. And as they are in him, they are not under the sun, in the sense in which the wise man speaks, for Jesus is higher than the heavens. They have no comforter in earthly things. Although in the kind and gracious providence of God they are provided with as much of the production of the teeming earth as their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of, and which they are to receive with thanksgiving, and use as not abusing it, knowing that its fashion passeth away, yet they are not to set their hearts on earthly substance, for it is all vanity.

"What should we wait and wish for then,
From creatures, earth and dust?
They make our expectations vain,
And disappoint our trust."

With the oppressors there is power,
but not unlimited nor unrestrained; for
"Death and hell shall do no more,
Than what our Father please."

Power was given to anti-Christ to afflict the saints forty and two months, and power to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, &c., only until the purpose of God is accomplished, and the remainder of their wrath God will restrain. But the oppressed have no power to avert the oppression of earth, and of earthly things. They have no comforter in the things below the sun. God is their portion. He giveth strength and comfort to the weak and fainting, and underneath them are his everlasting arms. We should rejoice in the assurance that from all this vanity and vexation of spirit, God's children shall, in due time, be delivered, and be made more than conquerors through him that has loved us.

“Wait then, my soul, submissive wait, Prostrate before his awful seat, And ‘midst the terrors of his rod, Trust in your wise and gracious God.”

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 208 - 211

ECCLESIASTES 12:5

Brother Beebe: I am a stranger to you in the flesh, but hope that I am not a stranger in spirit. Will you please give your views on Eec. xii. 5? "Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

MARY A. JONES

Reply to Sister Mary A. Jones - We have understood the wise man to be describing in a highly figurative way the infirmities and declining mental and physical powers and faculties incidental to old age, as explanatory of the evil days in which human life is bereft of its principal natural enjoyments. Having set forth in the preceding verses, by very striking similitudes, the shades and obscurity of the mind to earthly pleasures, the dimmed light of the eye, decayed teeth or grinders, ceasing to perform their wonted functions, the common avenues of earthly enjoyment closed, wearisome nights, and early rising with the voice of the bird. This is very common with the aged, and the enjoyment of music is low. *Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high.* Easily alarmed at every thing presented to the mind which they cannot comprehend; *and fears be in the way.* In the imbecility of second childhood, how easily alarmed at that which would have occasioned no uneasiness to them in their more youthful days. *And the almond tree shall flourish.* The almond tree is the earliest tree to blossom, and when in full bloom is like the peach tree, very white. The almond tree is in full blossom, and perfectly white before any of its leaves appear, thus giving it a more snowy whiteness of appearance. How strikingly this similitude describes the

hoary head of the aged. “The Hebrew name of the almond, *shakad,* comes from a verb signifying to make haste, to be in a hurry, to awake early. To the forwardness of the almond tree there seems to be a reference in Jer. i. 11, 12. ‘The word of the Lord came unto me saying, Jeremiah, what seest thou? And I said, I see a rod of an almond tree. Then the Lord said unto me, Thou hast well seen; for I will hasten my word to perform it’.” (Enc. of R. K.) *And the grasshopper shall be a burden.* The smallest objects will be magnified to enormous size, and in the natural impatience of old age shall feel depressed and sadly burdened by very small objects. *And desire faileth.* As we draw near the margin of the grave, with whitened locks, dimmed eyes, decayed teeth, enfeebled limbs, exhausted energies, and tottering frame, the yielding mind at length relinquishes its desire for terrestrial things, having no more capacity to enjoy them, now only waits and longs for a change that shall launch them into a new and more vigorous mode of existence. *Because man goeth to his long home.* Or because he is mortal and destined to leave his short, transitory abode, which has passed swifter than the weaver’s shuttle, and he goes to his final and everlasting destiny. *And the mourners go about the streets.* Earthly ties the most dear and cherished are dissolved, the loved one has passed away, and those who survive are reminded that they are rapidly following in their course, by seeing the mourners continually going about the streets.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 242 – 243

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY AND CHURCH CREEDS.

It is important for us to know what extent to religious events, and the uninspired creeds which have been written, may be beneficial to the people of God at the present day. We know that the inspired psalmist "considered the days of old, the years of ancient times." He says, "I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search." But this solemn retrospection was not to subserve an idle curiosity or vain ambition to acquire that knowledge of past events which serves only to inflate the mind with pride; for his mind was sorely perplexed with the soul-trying inquiry, "Will the Lord cast off forever? and will he be favorable no more? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" It was when under these trying circumstances that he said, "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old. I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings." – Psalm lxxvii. 5-12. He was not searching for some record of what he had done for the Lord, nor of what he had done for himself, nor yet for what men or angels had performed. A knowledge of what men or angels had done or could do could not reassure his faith that the mercy and truth of God were built up forever, and his faithfulness established in the very heavens. – Psalm lxxxix. 2. For these blessed assurances are not found among the uninspired records of men, but in the sacred archives of the eternal counsel of God, and revealed by the Holy Spirit to the sons of God and heirs of eternal glory. To look back to the rock when they are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence they are digged, is confirming to their faith and confidence in the God of their salvation. As the ancient patriarchs and

saints sometimes set up monuments and Ebenezers as reminiscences of God's special favors towards them, so it is profitable for the children of God at the present time to remember all the way in which the Lord their God has led them, and with gratitude and praises to acknowledge that his goodness and mercy have followed them all their days. But while we fully appreciate God's wonderful works of old to usward, and to the children of men, we should rely along on what the Lord has taught us by his word and spirit, and read with great caution the religious history of uninspired men.

Since the apostles of the Lamb have finished their course with us in the flesh, no history of the church of God should be allowed to lure us from the doctrine which they taught, the judgments they have recorded, the ordinances they have enjoined; nothing is to be added nor aught diminished from the perfect standard of faith and order they established, which is confirmed by all the valid authority of earth and heaven. What they have bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. The question with us now is not or should not be, What was believed or practiced in the church one hundred or a thousand years ago? but rather, What was the faith which was once delivered to the saints? We are not now to ask, Are our ministers by succession of ordination, through the dark ages of papal abominations, traceable to the apostles? but rather let it be asked, Are they such men as the Holy Ghost commanded the church to separate to the work where-unto he had called them?

Much is said at the present time, both by Catholics and Protestants, of what they claim to be a regular succession from the apostles, as establishing their claims to be the true church of Christ. But the fallacy of their vain boasting is clearly apparent when we compare their faith and order with that by which the primitive church was distinguished in her

original organization at Jerusalem. The constituent members of the church at pentecost were such as had by the outpouring of the Spirit and the preaching of the word been pricked in their hearts and made to feel their wretched, guilty and helpless condition, and gladly to receive the word, and to repent, or turn away from their former delusions, and be baptized and added to the church, and of them it is said, They continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer. – Acts ii. 37-42. This church of the First-born was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. – Eph. ii. 20, 21. They held no other doctrine than that of the apostles, aspired to no other religious fellowship, rested on no other foundation or chief corner stone; but these all, to Christ the Lord coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, were, as lively stones, quickened by their immortal and life-giving foundation, built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. – 1 Peter ii. 4-6. In seeking for the kingdom of God and his righteousness it is expedient for those who are called by grace and born from above (as none but such can see it) to look as far back as to the description of the church as faithfully given in the New Testament. Not even in the history of the first century of the gospel church are we to look for a perfect rule for our faith and practice as disciples of our Savior Jesus Christ; for while the apostles were still in the flesh carnality was detected in the church at Corinth, heresy and witchcraft in the churches of Galatia, and dissensions at Antioch; and in the days of the apostle John there were many antichrists which went out from the church because they were not of them. And Paul, Peter and Jude admonished the saints that many should depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. And even of the

Elders who wept and fell on Paul's neck, because he had told them they should see his face no more, should men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. The primitive saints could only abide in the apostles' fellowship as they continued steadfastly in their doctrine; they were allowed to follow no man only so far as they followed Christ. Can it then be safe for us to accept of the usages or traditions of the church, or of any organization claiming to be the church, as a standard of faith or rule of practice, which have existed since the time the apostles were in the flesh? If in the days of their sojourn on earth no church was perfectly free from defect, at what period from that to the present time have any of the churches surpassed the primitive churches in purity? We have a more sure guide and directory. The doctrine, examples and precepts of God our Savior, as given us in the New Testament, and written by the Holy Spirit in the heart of all who are born of God, alone are reliable. To them only are we exhorted to give heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the day star shall arise in our hearts. A faithful record of the history of the church of God through the intervening ages which have elapsed since the scriptures were written, could such a history be produced, would only be valuable in showing the long-suffering, tender kindness and boundless faithfulness of our covenant-keeping God in being merciful to our unrighteousness, and in warning us to beware of and avoid every error or departure from the divinely inspired rule, into which the church has been lured or betrayed at any time. In no age or period of the existence of the church has it been any less expedient to test her faith and practice by the unerring rule than at the present time. Individuals and churches have perhaps as frequently been drawn into error by tradition as by any other influence. Things which have been held as sacred by pious parents, esteemed preachers and learned instructors, are too often accepted by the unsuspecting disciples for truth, which will by no means bear

the scrutiny of investigation in the light of the scriptures. The saints can only be redeemed from their vain conversation, received by tradition from their fathers, by the cleansing blood of Christ; and even those who by him do believe in God, and have purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, are admonished to stand fast: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and over come, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." – 1 Peter i. 22; 2 Peter ii. 20, 21. We cannot obey the truth if we give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; and all spirits are seductive which would divert us from following our Lord, and tempt us to accept any other religious oracle than the holy scriptures which he has given as our infallible guide; and all religious doctrines or practices that are not approved by our Lord Jesus Christ and authorized by him, are doctrines of devils. All that he has taught and commanded is obligatory on his disciples, while all that he has not taught or commanded is forbidden.

Written creeds also, as embodying the opinions of men, or the decisions of prelates and councils on religious subjects, are to be treated with the utmost caution, and accepted only so far s they are sustained by the inspired scriptures. A brief statement or summary of what we believe is taught in the bible may be useful in distinguishing the church of God and children of his kingdom from others who profess to believe the scriptures, and yet reject what we believe them to establish as the truth of God; but when such professions of faith assume the form of edicts, of improvements upon the scriptures, or as infallible interpretations of them, or as an absolute standard of orthodoxy, their tendency cannot fail to be pernicious. If they claim to be more plain, clear or reliable than the scriptures, they are sacrilegious and blasphemously insulting to the infinite wisdom of God. To receive them as

anything more than a belief of what the scriptures teach, is to ignore the scriptures and take the open ground of rank infidelity. However sound and orthodox written creeds or articles of faith may be, they can only express the convictions of uninspired men, who are liable to err; and when written only to express our convictions or understanding of the divine testimony, we should explicitly state that nothing in them shall be construed as in any wise binding on the saints, only so far as by a close and prayerful investigation they shall be fully sustained by the scriptures. While therefore we give an expression of what we believe is taught in the scriptures, great care should be taken lest we make our views or understanding of them the test of fellowship, instead of the scriptures themselves. It is true the saints are admonished to be of one mind and one judgment, to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and any palpable departure from the faith of the gospel must unavoidably affect our fellowship; but such a departure must be ascertained and determined by the unerring standard of the scriptures, and not by any humanly-devised creed, for every written creed or abstract of the faith which we may have accepted, as well as the questionable theory to be settled, must be tested alike by the scriptures as the only reliable and infallible standard. If we set up our creeds or traditions above the inspired word, we make ourselves wise above what is written, and may fall under the rebuke of him who charged the Jews with making void the law of God by their traditions, and of whom he said, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” – Matt. xv. 9. The repudiation of long cherished traditions, or the ignoring of creeds, can only amount to heresy so far as the repudiating or ignoring party can be convicted of departure from the doctrine and precepts of our Lord and his apostles, as given to us in the New Testament.

In more than three score years of our labors in the gospel ministry we have never demanded or required of any candidates for baptism that they should sign any pledge to adhere to any other standard of faith or practice than that which is given in the scriptures. We have said to them, "If thou believest in the Lord Jesus Christ with all thy heart, thou mayest." After hearing from them a satisfactory relation of what we believe to be a genuine experience of the new birth, we have usually asked them if they believe the doctrine and order held and preached by the Old or Primitive Baptists, so far as they understand it, and if their experience is in harmony with it. Upon receiving an affirmative reply, we bid them welcome to the ordinance, and hold ourself ready, if need be in the same hour of the night or of the day, to administer that sacred ordinance. WE know of no divine authority for delaying the administration for a more convenient season, or to first bury a father, or take leave of those we are to leave behind us. As every one who is born from above, and who loves the precious Savior, is commanded to take his yoke, bear his cross and follow him, and as baptism is the first act of obedience of the heaven-born child, no other duty or religious privilege can be in order until this is performed. But upon this subject of baptism we may hereafter write, if the Lord shall so permit.

[As this is the last editorial left by our dear father, and written but a few days before he was called home, the one contemplated in the last sentence was not written. May not this fact imply a reproof to those who love and hope for salvation through our Lord Jesus, yet wait for something more than his plain command to urge them to obey him in following his great example?]

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 16
August 15, 1881

EFFICACIOUS POWER OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

An aged and esteemed brother has, through sister C.M. Johnson, desired our views on the great atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people; and especially on the efficacious power of the blood of Christ. This subject is so exceedingly comprehensive as to take in its grasp the whole system of redemption, and salvation by grace. The atonement made by our Lord Jesus Christ for his people, is that by which the law of God is honored and fulfilled, divine justice receives a perfect, complete and everlasting satisfaction for all the sins of the people of God, and in which they are redeemed from all iniquity, cleansed, purged, purified and made accepted in the Beloved, and are reconciled to God. Atonement not only means an offering made, a ransom price paid, and eternal redemption obtained, but it signifies satisfaction, reconciliation, or as the word expresses, at-one-ment. The subject opens for our contemplation a field too broad to be elucidated in one short essay, for volumes well written would leave the half untold. To know the value of the atonement would require a full knowledge of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, in which they were involved for whom it is made, and their total depravity and just condemnation by the righteous law of God, and their utter inability and indisposition to help themselves, their alienation from, and deep and implacable enmity to him, and the impossibility of deliverance or salvation in any other way or by any other being in heaven or in earth. The atonement meets, cancels, and forever removes every impediment out of the way, pays every demand required, supplies every indispensable requisite, and so perfectly identifies him that sanctifieth with them that are sanctified, as to make him their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

This atonement was made for all the chosen people of God, when Jesus was delivered for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification, and each and all of them receive this atonement experimentally, and by faith, as soon as they are born of the Spirit. Not one of the millions for whom it was made can by any possibility fail to receive its effects, for with his stripes they are healed. “By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.” None can lay anything to their charge, for it is God that justifieth; it is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen from the dead, and risen for their justification, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in him. In all this work, the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in its efficacious power is most gloriously displayed; the efficacious power of which we are called upon now to consider.

When we speak of the blood of Christ we mean something more than the fluid that coursed through his veins when here in the flesh, or that gushed from his side when pierced with the Roman spear. It is true that this was indispensable to the salvation of his people; for without the shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sins. And the perpetual tide of blood which flowed for ages from patriarchal and Hebrew altars, pointed as types to the great sacrifice, when Jesus should not only drain his veins of all the blood which they contained, but also pour out his soul unto death, and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself.

The blood of Christ is often referred to as meaning his life which he gave for his sheep, and as the fountain which he has opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness. The saving virtue of his mediatorial work applied savingly to the hearts of his redeemed is called the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. By it their hearts were sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies are

washed in pure water. The blood which gushed from his head, and hands, and feet and side, when bleeding on the cross, is not literally sprinided on us, but its saving virtue is applied by the Spirit to all for whom it was shed, for the remission of their sins. And the wine which was set apart for the communion of saints, being emblematic, is called his blood in the New Testament, which was shed for many. To it allusion is made in Zechariah 9:11, and in Hebrews 10:29. For the New Testament and the New Covenant mean one and the same. When it is said that he has washed us in his blood, we understand an application of the sacred and saving efficacy of his atonement has been applied experimentally, for purging us from the defilement of sin.

Having thus briefly presented some outlines of the scriptural doctrine of the atonement, and the manner in which the blood of Christ is applied to the people of God, we will now attend to the special request of our venerable brother, in regard to its efficacious power. And this we propose to do by presenting such scriptural testimony as God has furnished in the sacred volume, testifying of its design and effects.

1. Its purging and cleansing power. “For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.” Hebrews 9:13, 15. “And the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” I John 1:7. “And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.” I Corinthians 6:11. “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple.”

Revelation 7:14,15. “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Titus 2:14.

2. Its efficacious power to redeem those for whom it was shed is fully demonstrated by inspired testimony. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him believe in God.” I Peter 1:18-20. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Ephesians 1:7. “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Revelation 5:9.

3. Its justifying power. “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to *declare* [demonstrate or exemplify] his righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Romans 3:24,25. “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Romans 8:33,34. The perfect and everlasting justification of all the people of God, from all things from which they could not be justified by the law, is predicated upon the virtue, power and infallible efficacy of his blood. “He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” Romans 4:25. “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge

shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:11.

4. It has efficient power in transforming those to whom it is applied. “Wherefore remember that ye being in time past Gentiles.” “That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world; but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:11-13. Transformed by virtue of the blood of Christ, from enemies to friends, from hatred to love, from sin, condemnation and wrath, to holiness, justification and glory.

5. The powerful efficacy of the blood of Christ is demonstrated in sanctification, separation from the world and consecration to God. Redeemed out of the kingdoms and tribes of mankind, and unto God, by the blood of the Lamb slain. Bought with a price, and that price is his precious blood, we are not our own; but in our consecration, set apart for our Redeemer’s service, to be priests and kings unto God, and to reign with Christ forever. As the consecrated things for the service of the tabernacle and temple were all sanctified by blood, so by the matchless power and saving virtue of the blood of Christ we are washed, cleansed, purified, and made meet to be partakers with the saints in light.

In this consecration we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. Hebrews 10:19,20. “Through sanctification of the spirit, and spriniding of the blood of Jesus Christ.” I Peter 1:2.

6. His blood is efficacious and omnipotent in making peace for, and in speaking peace to, those for whom it was shed.

“Therefore being justified by faith, [in his blood, in distinction from works] we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:1,2. “And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight.” Colossians 1:18-22. “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.” Ephesians 2:14-17. But the language of his precious blood, to those who have received an application, differs from that of the blood even of righteous Abel; for the voice of the blood of Abel cried to God from the ground, for vengeance; but those who are come to the heavenly Jerusalem are come to the blood of sprinkling, or consecration, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel; for it speaketh peace. It has hushed all the thunders of mount Sinai, quenched all the wrath of the divine law, abolished death, and destroyed him that had the power of death; having removed every impediment that stood in the way of our salvation, washed away all our pollutions, cleansed us from the guilt, as well as from the penalty, or punishment due to our transgressions; slain the enmity that

rankled in us against God, and has made us white and pure and clean, and acceptable to God in the Beloved.

7. We may also speak of the triumphing power and infallible efficacy of our Redeemer's blood. It has triumphed over sin, death and hell; it has led captivity captive, has become the destruction of death, and the plague of the grave. And it has secured a perfect and complete victory to all the people of God over all their enemies, and enabled them to say, with the apostle, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." I Corinthians 15:56,57. The mighty conflict described by John, in Revelation 12:1-11, between Michael and his angels, and the Dragon and his angels, the former overcame the latter, "By the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Verse 11. By his all-powerful blood the bars of death are broken, the doors of the grave are opened, the prisoners are released, and liberty is proclaimed to the captives. A voice from the eternal throne bids the daughter of Zion to "rejoice greatly," and the daughter of Jerusalem to shout, for her King cometh unto her. He is just, and having salvation. And, "as for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." Zechariah 9:9 & 11. The daughter of Zion, and of Jerusalem are one and the same, and mean the gospel church, unto whom Christ is given for a Covenant, and in whom all the promises of God are, Yea, and Amen. The blood of the covenant is therefore the blood of Christ; as defined by our Lord himself in the cup of the communion of saints, of which he said to his disciples, "Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins." Matthew 26:27,28. Observe, the words covenant and testament mean the same. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force, after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all

while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first was dedicated without blood." Hebrews 9:16-18. The first testament, which was called a covenant, was dedicated by blood, but it was by the blood of beasts, and typical of the covenant of the daughter of Jerusalem, by the blood of which her prisoners are sent forth out of the pit; and by the blood of which all the blessings and promises of the new testament, or covenant, are dedicated, secured and made certain to all the redeemed of the Lord, and by which Christ is consecrated as the High Priest unto his people.

What would all the mediatorial work of Christ have availed us, if there had not been power and efficacy enough in the blood of Christ to redeem his people and secure their salvation?

The efficacious power of his blood may be inferred from his peculiar Priesthood. He was made a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec, by the oath of God who sware and will not repent. Not by the law of a carnal commandment; but by the power of an endless life. The High Priest of a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people." No other blood but his could avail; or if offered by any other priest, it would not suffice. The Word, which was with God, was made flesh; and dressed in all his priestly garments, bearing the names of all for whom he officiated, in his breastplate, equally related to his Father and to his church, a Daysman who could lay his hands on both; identifying in his mediatorial person, the Son of God, and the Son of man; David's son, and David's Lord.

"Descended from the eternal God,
He bears the name of his own Son;
And dressed in human flesh and blood,
He puts his priestly garments on.

The mitred crown, the embroidered vest,
With graceful dignity he wears,
And, in full splendor, on his breast,
The sacred oracle appears.

So he presents his sacrifice,
And offering most divinely sweet;
While clouds of fragrant incense rise,
And cover o’er the mercy seat.”

To deny or doubt the sovereign efficacy of the blood of Christ, in the complete salvation of all for whom it was shed, is most presumptuously to call the blood of the Covenant, or testament, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and to do despite to the spirit of grace; from which presumption may the Lord keep us by his grace.

Our guilty world swarms with those who preach that Christ’s blood was shed alike for everybody; but that it has not power to save anybody. That it can only be made efficacious by the will and works of men.

We have in this short article presented the testimony of God’s holy word in plain and pointed declarations from the mouth of God, which cannot be successfully controverted, proving that the blood of Christ cleanseth all for whom it was shed, from all sin.

That it redeems them from all iniquity, that it redeems them from all condemnation and wrath, and redeems them to God, and makes them kings and priests to God, and they shall reign with Christ forever.

That it secures their justification from all things from which they could not be justified by the law, or in any other way.

That it transforms them, and translates them, from aliens, strangers and enemies, to fellow citizens with the saints, and makes them meet to be partakers with the saints in light.

That it sanctifies, or separates them from the kindreds of the earth out of which it redeems them, and consecrates them to God, as living members of the body of Christ.

That it makes and secures to them peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That by it they have the victory over sin, death and hell, and shall triumph over all their enemies through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

If this array of Scripture be admitted, then we ask what is deficient, to be supplied by men, or means, by human will or works?

"Go, ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble in despair.

But I'll retire beneath the cross;
Savior, at thy dear feet I'll lie.
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming red, shall pass me to'."

Middletown, N.Y.
June 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 427 – 434

ELD. DAVIS DIMOCK'S LETTER.

"YE have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye arc gone away; and what have I more? And what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee?" - Judges xviii. 24.

FROM THE "WORLD."

Extracts of a letter from Davis Dimock, Esq., one of the Vice-Presidents of the Baptist Missionary Association of Pennsylvania, dated:

MONTROSE, Pa., July 16, 1833.

"You requested me to give you all the information in my power, which I am Willing to do. You ask, What are the churches able to do for missions, &c? I answer, more than they have done; but they need to be made acquainted more fully with the necessity and importance of giving. The churches, however, are poor, in comparison to those in older settlements. A paper called the "Signs of the Times," opposed to every benevolent exertion or christian effort is circulating in some of our churches, greatly to their injury. A few only, however, are distracted by it, and I am happy to say that most of our churches are awaking to a sense of their duty to send the gospel to the destitute. Taking the whole northern part of Pennsylvania, with a few exceptions, it may be compared to a wilderness before the new settlers - they must clear the ground, sow the seed, and wait patiently one year for a harvest. So must the Missionary Societies do in relation to pecuniary motions. But their missionaries have not been obliged to wait a year for a harvest of souls. They seem to resemble the tree that yields her fruit every month.

You ask, How many missionaries are wanted? If I were to answer according to my best judgment, I should say not less than eight for four counties - Luzerne, Bradford, Susquehanna, and Wayne. But one for each are much needed, in addition to those already in the field. There needs at least two in the Wyoming Valley - where Elders Morton and Brown are now laboring, under the direction of the New York State Convention, for three months. Brother Morton can be continued at Wilksbarre, if the two Boards of the New York State Convention, and the Baptist Missionary Association of Pennsylvania, agree in his support, as a settled minister; and I am confident he is a suitable man for that station. I hope measures will be immediately taken to continue him there. I do not know but brother Brown could be persuaded to continue, but fear not. I spent two weeks in the Valley, assisting them, by an appointment from the New York Board, and find them excellent men, well qualified for the work."

* * * * * * *

"The missionary tide seems to roll from every quarter of our country toward the Mississippi Valley, but I believe we are almost as destitute as that desolate region."

REMARKS.

It is remarkable to witness the frequent acknowledgments made by the advocates of the modern enterprises for evangelizing the world, that their entire faith and knowledge of religion consists in, and is composed of, these schemes and human inventions.

The editor of the *Christian Secretary,* in an article which we copied into the last number of the "Signs of the Times," speaking of the address of the Old School brethren, says that "It is not within our immediate knowledge that any other

christian community but our own is put to shame before the saints of all the world, by a combination of men, bearing their own name, making war upon the *entire whole of their labors and sufferings and sacrifices*" &c. Elder Dimock, in the above letter, says: "A paper called the "Signs of the Times", opposed to every benevolent exertion or christian effort, is circulating in some of our churches, greatly to their injury. A few only, however, are distracted by it."

We feel no spirit of resentment excited by their unfriendly allusions to our humble sheet; but we do feel bound to pity the spiritual blindness of all such learned novices (they must pardon the term, as our language affords none more suitable to convey our meaning) as can discover no other benevolence in the gospel of a blessed Savior than that which has been ushered into existence within these last thirty years, and if the editor of the *Secretary* can point out to us any passage in either of the two addresses published in our sixteenth number which can be righteously construed into an opposition to any system of benevolence of an earlier date, we shall feel obliged; or if the Hon. Judge Dimock of Pennsylvania can prove his assertion true, we will confess our errors on the house-top.

We acknowledge ourself not a little surprised at the unqualified assertion that the "Signs of the Times" "is opposed to *every exertion or christian effort*" from the pen of one on whose name concentres so many dignified titles. Having been duly appointed one of the Judges of a county in Pennsylvania, and having also been duly set apart by ordination to the ministry *of general atonement and offered salvation,* in the year 1803, by a community of united brethren, who were subsequently formed into what is called the "Susquehanna Baptist Association," holding the doctrine that "Christ died for the sins of the whole world, and that the Holy Ghost moves irresistibly upon the mind of every man

until they are convinced of sin, and brought to that liberty of choice which was lost in their head, by the which they may repent of their sins, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. and be made free indeed," &c. (See their Articles of Faith, Sec. 6th and 7th.) We know not but he is in good standing with that association to this day; but we discover by the announcement of the receipt of his letter in the *World* he is dubbed Vice-President of the Baptist Mission Association of Pennsylvania.. We say we were not prepared to receive even from so distinguished an individual a statement so destitute of truth. Let it be understood distinctly we do most unequivocally deny the charge, and call on Eld. Dimock to prove that the "Signs of the Times" is opposed to every benevolent exertion, or to any christian effort. We readily admit our opposition to the present system of Bible Societies as religious institutions for the conversion of the world; but we are so far from being opposed to the gratuitous circulation of the bible, (without note or comment), that in a preceding number we have offered to supply a whole country at our own expense. We are opposed to Tract Societies, and we are ready to give the reason of our opposition; but we are not opposed to the circulation of bible truth in pamphlet, tract, newspapers, or any other form, gratuitously or otherwise.

We oppose such Mission Societies as are independent of the church of God, which we hold to be the only divinely authorized religious society upon earth; but we have, through the columns of a former number of this paper, offered to support the Lord's ministers or missionaries to the utmost of our ability, even to the dividing of our last loaf with such of them as go out without purse or scrip, relying upon the sure mercies of David, without waiting to get the Lord's promises endorsed by a Mission Board. We feel disposed to let such as have hired themselves out to Missionary Boards stand or fall to their own master, knowing that "his servants

they are, to whom they yield themselves servants to obey." We consider all that a kind Providence has put into our possession belongs to the Lord, and as his steward we are ready to deal it out to his servants according to his word.

If it be gospel benevolence to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the widow and the fatherless, and to preach the gospel to the poor, without fee or reward, then let our accusers, Messrs. Canfield and Dimock, point out the instances where we have been delinquent, or have opposed others in the pursuit of these christian duties. We would call on Elder Dimock once more to seriously reflect on the subject, examine all the back numbers of the "Signs of the Times," and then say if there is no benevolent exertion or christian effort but what the "Signs of the Times" is opposed to, and if upon reflection he should find that he has been premature in making the assertion, he will act his own pleasure about acknowledging such conviction. If he can reconcile his conscience to his conduct, we envy him not.

With Mr. Canfield's "*Worldly saints,*" or "*saints of all the world,*" we have but little more to do. than to expose them. They are not the saints of God, for "God's kingdom is not of this world." - John xviii. 36. Christ disowns them, consequently they must belong to some other kingdom; and we read of but two kingdoms on the earth, (as spiritual kingdoms.) The one has for its monarch the "Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," and the government is on his shoulder. But the other has "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." The former is distinguished as the kingdom of God; the latter is the kingdom of Satan. The one is of heaven, and owns none as its subjects but such as are born of the water and of the Spirit; the other is of this world, and embraces all those

communities spoken of by Mr. Canfield as saints of all the world.

Our war with the “Mother Arminianism, and her brood of institutions,” is considered by Messrs. Canfield and Dimock as making war upon the entire whole of their labors, and sufferings, and sacrifices, and opposing every benevolent exertion and christian effort embraced in their system. Their language is plain, and we shall only add in the words of Moses, (Deut. xxxii. 31,) “Their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.”

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
August 28, 1833.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 91 - 96

ELDER J. ARMSTRONG'S LETTER.

We are pleased with the general sentiment of the letter of our esteemed brother, which will be found in this number, on the subject of the ancient glories of the Son of God. His independent and eternal Deity, his Sonship, his Mediatorial identity, &c. And his arguments in refutation of the notion of his fleshly or corporeal body having existed as such, before he was made of a woman, we think are unanswerable, but that the soul of him did exist with the Father before the world began, does not so clearly appear. The first account given in divine revelation of the existence of soul, or souls, is given of the earthly Adam—God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and *man became a living soul.* And Paul in discriminating between the first and second Adam, in 1 Cor. xv., says, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." All men descending from the first progenitor, Adam, are generated like him, soul and body. And so all who are regenerated as the seed of Christ, receive from Christ, not souls, but spiritual, immortal, eternal life, which John says was with the Father, and was manifested, and which he also says was given us in Christ; so that he that hath the Son of God hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. But he does not say, that he that hath not the Son of God hath not a soul, for they all have souls in their relation to the first Adam.

We think brother Armstrong had fully established the preexistence of the Sonship of the Redeemer, in proving by the record which God has given of him, that he was set up from everlasting in his Mediatorial Headship of his church, as the life and immortality of his body, which is the church. That which constitutes him the Son of God, must have its

existence originally in the Father. And that Life, which Christ is, was with the Father, proceeded from the Father, and was given to the church in Christ as spiritual Adam, or spiritual Progenitor, or the quickening Spirit.

In his assumption of a fleshly body, he was *made flesh,* made of a woman, and made under the law. What law? The law that said, “The SOUL that sinneth, it shall die.” Had his soul, which on Calvary was poured out unto death, preexisted his being made of a woman, why was it necessary that he should be made of a woman, that he might be made under the law? And again, man without a soul was but dust of the ground; but when animated by the breath of life, he became - that is, man became - a living soul. God’s children, being partakers of flesh and blood, partake of flesh and blood in its animated state, as comprising soul and body, So Christ in “likewise also taking part of the same” must have taken on him a body, and that body, like the bodies of his members, must be in possession of a soul that could suffer the penalty of the law. How else could he have been found in the fashion of man? A corporeal body without a soul is not called man, it is the soul which distinguishes man from a mere animal.

The term *man* is applied to Christ, we think, in a two-fold application. First, as the Lord from heaven; not the soul from heaven. And as the Man of God’s right hand, made strong for himself, as the Mediatorial Head in vital union with his members which are his body; the fullness of him that filleth all in all. These members being many, all the election of grace are one body, so also is Christ. And when all shall be brought experimentally into the unity of the faith, the measurement of the body of which Christ is the Head will be full, complete and perfect as that body existed with the Father before the world began. There was the perfect man, as standing at the right hand of the Godhead, to which the church shall be conformed when “We all come in the unity of

the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." - Eph. iv. 13. Again, the term is applicable to him in his incarnation. Thus, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself," &c. - Phil. ii. 6-8. In this last sense of the word, he became a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief; carried our sorrows, bore our griefs, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. In being put to death in the flesh, he poured out his soul, as well as his blood, unto death. His soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, and his soul was made, with his body and blood, an offering for sin, when he saw his seed, prolonged his days, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hands.

Our dear brother Armstrong, we are sure, will take no offence at our remarks on this one point in his letter, as we fully indorse his views generally, in the able and unanswerable article which he has written against the extravagant, but unscriptural notions of the non-resurrectionists, who, if we have correctly apprehended their position, affirm that nothing will ever go to heaven that did not come from that place. On their hypothesis, the creatures of this mundane sphere could have no interest in the provisions of grace and mercy. As Paul has declared, that if the dead rise not, then Christ is not risen; and if he be not risen, we are yet in our sins, &c., they, in order to evade the direct force of Paul's testimony, endeavor to establish the notion that the fleshly body in which Christ suffered, did exist as such, and that he brought it down to earth with him, and then took it back to heaven in his ascension. But even if this theory could be established, would it not prove too much for their purpose? seeing Christ arose from the dead and became

the first fruits of them that slept, giving assurance as the first fruits so shall the whole harvest be; it would unavoidably involve the monstrous conclusion that the fleshly bodies of all the saints also came down from a pre-existing state in heaven, whereas God has said they were made of the dust of the ground.

We regret to learn that such speculations exist in some of our western states, and has created much distress among those who preach Christ and the resurrection. May God deliver all those who love and fear him from this and all other perversions of the sacred Scriptures, and save us from the snares of the devil, and give us more fully to know him and the power of his resurrection, and conform us more and more to the heavenly image, for his name’s sake.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 364 - 367

ELDER MEREDITH'S APPEAL

Elder Peter Meredith's appeal to the brethren of the Delaware Old School Baptist Association, which fills over five whole columns of the *Delaware State Reporter,* is principally made up of bitter complaints against the "*Signs of the Times,*" ourself, and some of our correspondents; but as he has appealed to the brethren of the Delaware O.S. Association, to them let him go. So far as we are implicated, there is no tribunal on earth to which we would more willingly consent to be tried, especially as they are so well acquainted with both accuser and accused. And as we have no wish to bias the minds of the brethren of that Association in regard to the merits of the case, we submit the whole matter, as he has presented it; and if on investigation, we are found guilty of the apostasy, heresy and sedition charged on us, we are willing to abide their decision. On the appeal itself, we will not at this time make any further remarks.

But as but few brethren of Delaware Association were present at the last session of the Salisbury Association, it is due to them, as well as to ourself, to offer some strictures on the Postscript which follows the Appeal; and lest we should, by accident or otherwise, mis-state the language, we will copy the postscript verbatim, inserting letters of the alphabet to mark those passages in the postscript on which we propose to remark:

"P.S. After writing the foregoing, I attended the Salisbury Association, and the Lord in his providence preventing the beloved Barton and Conklin attending the said meeting (a), Eld. Beebe and his workmen having none present to restrain them, gave us their new doctrine with a masterly hand (b). We were told that when Christ died, his church died in him (C); that the said Christ was a delegated being by whom

God created all things (d): that the said Christ laid down his life for the church, but shed no blood until after he was dead (e). The same Christ, he that was born of Mary or both, (as they were not definite) needed redemption as much as his people (f). They represented their Christ to us as distinct from the man born in Bethlehem, and who died on Calvary, as the hog is from the sty in which it is fed (g). They told the congregation, consisting of hundreds, that we Arminians, who will not believe in their eternal flesh and bone Christ (h), believe that Christ shed an abundance of blood, so much that we could take a wash-basin full of it and wash our hands in it, but we were deceived, for Christ shed no blood until the soldier thrust the spear into his side (i), and if such language is not counting the bloody sweat in the garden and the three hours on the cross, an unholy thing, I am no judge of what men mean by what they say (j). But the heart sickens and my soul mourns over these things, and I pray God to deliver his people from such speculation (k). And now, dear brethren, you will please excuse me for addressing you through a political paper, as you know we could not address you through your paper, the "*Signs of the Times,*" because its columns have been closed against everything that is opposed to their new doctrine (l), except when some opponent's moral character is to be traduced (in). - P.M."

Remarks - **a.** None more sincerely regretted the absence of the two beloved brethren that we did. **b.** Who Eld. Meredith means by Elder Beebe's workmen, we are not told. There were no preachers from Corresponding Associations present, but Elders Peter Meredith, Daniel L. Harding, R. C. Leachman, and Gilbert Beebe; and we are certain that no advantage was taken by any of these of the absence of brethren Barton and Conklin. Nor do we believe that any sentiment was advanced by any one of the above named Elders, with which Elders Barton and Conklin would not fully concur. Elder Beebe was not aware that he had any workmen in attendance, as he is

certain he had employed none, and none have called on him for pay. If Elder Meredith wishes only to slur those Elders who were in attendance, or to deny that they are servants of God, and servants of the church, and are only Beebe's workmen, we envy not the spirit that called forth this expression of his feelings. The Elders stigmatized, however, stand high in the esteem and fellowship of Elders Barton and Conklin, as also of the Delaware and the Salisbury Associations. Brother Meredith was probably correct in saying there was none present to restrain the brethren; for we were perfectly unconscious that we were advancing any doctrine in which all sound Old School Baptists do not fully concur; we therefore felt no constraint: but he is not correct in calling the doctrine which was preached at that time and place *new doctrine;* for however imperfectly the doctrine of the gospel was set forth by us, our aim was to preach nothing that had not been preached by our Redeemer and his inspired apostles in the primitive age of the church. And if Elder M. or any other brother present discovered any departure from the apostle's doctrine, they did not make their discovery known to us at the time. **c.** This assertmn is altogether incorrect, except that it may have been implied in the preaching that the church of God has always existed in Christ, that Christ is the life of the church, that he suffered that death which was due to the law and divine justice for her transgressions, and that "the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." 2 Cor. v. 14. The union of Christ and his church is not a new doctrine with Old School Baptists. But that Christ was presented as only a delegated being, or anything short of the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the true God and Eternal Life we deny. **d.** It is true that it was asserted that Christ laid down his life for the church; and we honestly thought that even Elder M. himself believed that doctrine; but it was not said that he shed no blood until after he was dead. One brother did remark that we have no account given us in the

scriptures of his shedding any blood literally in his crucifixion until the soldier pierced his side with a spear, which was, as we are informed, after his death; but it was not said that he shed none before he died. On the other hand, we believe the nailing of his hands and feet to the cross, the crown of thorns which he wore, as well as the cruel scourging he endured, would all cause blood to flow from his sacred veins. The brother alluded to was showing that the saints being washed in the Redeemer's blood had a deeper signification than a literal construction of the term blood. **e.** This is rather hard straining to give the impression that the preachers at that Association had been setting forth two Christs - one that was born of the Virgin Mary, and another Christ, and that one of these, without definitely telling which, needed redemption as much as his people. Not a word of all this is correctly stated. Neither mis, nor anything like it was stated in our hearing. One brother remarked on some passage which represented Christ as pouring out strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death; and of his prayer, "Father. save me from this hour," etc., as implying that in that sense he was himself brought to view as a subject of salvation - not redemption. **f.** This assertion is altogether incorrect. No such irreverent comparisons were made by any preacher during that meeting. We would be shocked to hear such unbecoming language in connection with the great Redeemer's name. No one at that meeting in our hearing attempted to represent Christ as distinct from, or any other than he that was born in Bethlehem, and who suffered on the cross; and how Elder Meredith dare charge such vulgar, profane, not to say blasphemous language to us, or our brethren, when he knows well that his assertion can be disproved by every one of the hundreds before whom he affirms that such words were used, we cannot conceive. In this we charge brother M. with departure from the truth, and we call on the church of which he is a member to attend to it. **g.** These assertions are also untrue. No preacher charged Elder Meredith, and those

(if any who stand with him) of being arminians; nor did any preacher define arminianism to be the rejection of the doctrine of an eternal flesh and bone Christ. Not one of the preachers thus misrepresented believe that the flesh and bones of our Redeemer are eternal; nor have any one of them ever expressed or implied any such belief. But we do believe that Christ existed in his Mediatorial character from everlasting as the Head and embodiment of his church, which was chosen in him before the foundation of the world. But this Mediator so existed, not in flesh and bone, but as the Son of God, who, when the fulness of time was come, came into the world, was made of a woman, was made flesh, and took on him a body of flesh and bones and blood, in which he honored, obeyed and satisfied the law, bore its dreadful penalty for and in behalf of his church, died and arose in that body. **h.** Nor did any one of us charge that Eld. Meredith believed that Christ shed an abundance of blood, nor was there a word said about Elder Meredith and his party during all the preaching at that Association, unless it were said after we left. **i.** Where does Elder Meredith learn that Christ shed bloody sweat in the garden? We read that he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground; this is a strong figurative expression to show that he was in agony. But there was nothing said either affirming or denying that he shed blood in the garden, or in the three hours on the cross. It was simply remarked by one of the preachers that he did not know that we had any account given in the scriptures of his shedding any blood on the cross until he was pierced with the spear, after the soldiers had examined and found that he was already dead. Now how easy it would have been if Brother M. knew of any scripture asserting that he shed blood, before he was pierced, to have mentioned it in a brotherly way. As to brother M. not knowing what men mean by what they say, if his description of the preaching at the Salisbury Association be a fair specimen, and if he has given as fair and honest a statement of it as he can, we must

concede that he has not the capacity to know what men mean by what they say, for he has missed the mark egregiously in his description. Indeed, this is the most charitable conclusion we can arrive at in his case, and we could well bear with his want of capacity to understand the clear and plain import of words, were he not more obstinate and stubborn than weak. If he fails to understand what men mean by what they say, he is not justified in reporting that they have said what he knows they have not said. And we venture the opinion that there was not a person at that Association who understood any preacher to say *that their Christ was as distinct from the man born in Bethlehem, and who died on Calvary, as a hog is from the sty in which he is fed.*

j. We feel shocked when we hear one slander the servants of God, traduce their character, misrepresent their language, and all with so much apparent malice and bitterness, and with the same breath take the holy name of God upon their slandering lips. When, as James says, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." Jas. Iii. 10.

k. It is surprising that any political paper, pretending to any respectability, should open its columns for such a purpose. If the columns of the "Signs" were closed, Elder M. knows of a paper, and an editor, ready to receive anything, however slanderous or abusive against those for whose disparagement his whole communication was designed.

l. If the "Signs of the Times" were open to those who oppose the doctrine which we hold and publish, when they wish to traduce any one's moral character, we certainly should think Elder M. might have got his article in; it could not have been well rejected for want of a sufficient amount of calumny.

In conclusion, we wish to say that so far as we are personally misrepresented, we do freely forgive. We have borne the same kind of treatment from the same brother for years; as a general thing, he has confessed his fault about once a year, and we have buried the hatchet; but his reconciliation has not generally lasted but a few days, before we have been assailed with new accusations, and in some cases published as an heretic; still we have borne it; and still we are willing to bear all things; and still we do believe that brother Meredith is a subject of grace, and will be finally delivered from all these corruptions of the flesh, and through grace finally sing in sweet harmony with those whom he now assails, the songs of redeeming grace and saving love, when time shall be no more. But it is on account of those dear servants of Christ, brethren Leachman and Harding, and perhaps brother Slater, who are stigmatized as Eld. Beebe's workmen. These brethren are younger than ourself; they may live to proclaim the everlasting gospel when brother Meredith and ourself shall slumber in our graves; we cannot persuade ourself to leave the false impression on them, to hurt their usefulness as the ministers of Christ.

The errors which Elder M. charges us with, we have constantly disclaimed, for years. Still he persists in charging us. We have repeatedly assured him that if he has from anything we have ever said or written understood us to advance *Arianism, Socinianism* or any other *ism* derogatory to the character of our divine Redeemer, or setting him forth as less than the Eternal God, he has not understood us as we have intended. None can be more uncompromisingly opposed to these heresies than we are. But that the files of the "Signs" should be searched for twenty-six years, and garbled expressions, disjointed sentences, and parts of sentences collected of what we or others have written, and these mingled in the most confused manner, to try to make the public believe that we hold what we disclaim, what we do not

hold or believe, what we constantly deny, and what we abhor, seems to us unreasonable, unbrotherly, and beneath the character which christians should try to maintain.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 1,1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 164 - 171

ELDER ROBERT C. LEACHMAN HAS FALLEN ASLEEP.

Scarcely had we announced in our last paper the latest intelligence we had received, when we received the painful tidings that he was supposed to be dying, with a summons to hasten to his bedside. We took the first train on Friday morning the 9th, at 5 o'clock a.m., at about the very minute he breathed his last. We reached Alexandria, Va., at about 7 p.m. of the same day, where we were informed that his spirit had departed, and as we could get no farther that night, we took the train the next morning with many sorrowing brethren and sisters from Alexandria and Washington, and arrived at his house at Manassas, Prince Wm. Co., at about 11 o'clock a.m., and found arrangements were made for his funeral to be attended at half past one o'clock on Saturday, Feb. 20.

Our dear brother Leachman was born of the flesh, and born again of the incorruptible word, was baptized by the late Elder Samuel Trott, in the fellowship of the Bethlehem church, in about the year 1837, licensed to preach the gospel in 1838, and ordained to the work of the ministry, at Bethlehem, in 1839, and continued to hold his residence, except what time he was driven from his home during the late war, and finally died, all within five miles of the place of his birth. As a minister of the gospel he was truly one of Zion's sons that had grown up in his youth, and polished after the similitude of a palace. From the time of his first connection with the church of God, no blemish has soiled his character; as an humble devoted follower of the Lamb, and servant of the church, no one could be more devoted or indefatigable. Regardless of his own ease or pecuniary interests, he labored more abundantly than any of his

contemporaries. Besides the pastoral charge of all the churches in Fairfax, Alexandria, Prince William., Fauquier and Loudoun counties [after the death of our lamented brother Trott], he traveled very extensively attending associations and other meetings in many and distant states.

All who are acquainted with him concede that his gifts for the ministry were of the very highest order. His manner was bold and fearless of man, and at the same time as meek, humble and tender in his feelings as any one we have ever known. His gift for arguments, illustration and elucidation of the doctrine were powerful, clear and unanswerable, and his address easy, and remarkably engaging. Thousands even of those who did not love the doctrine were fond of hearing him, and respected him for his talents while they had no relish for the truth which he so forcibly proclaimed.

During the late cruel war his house and farm were alternately occupied by the belligerent armies of the North and South, and he was driven from his home and his buildings destroyed, and he was reduced from comfortable circumstances, to an exile without where to lay his head. Although a man of peace, and opposed to strife and bloodshed, he was arrested by the Federal powers, and incarcerated in loathsome and filthy prisons, because he could not conscientiously take an oath which they who demanded it of him would not allow him keep inviolate. After being liberated from prison he spent his time chiefly in the bounds of our churches in North Carolina until the war was over, and then returned to the churches of his pastoral charge, faithfully serving them until released from his excessive labors by death. Notwithstanding all the depressing circumstances he had to encounter, the churches greatly prospered under his labors, and now are left in a very destitute condition. But one ordained minister remains among the churches in that whole region. Our young brother,

A.B. Francis, who was ordained to the work last August, whose standing and gifts are promising; but the field is exceedingly wide for one to occupy alone. May the Lord strengthen and sustain him and send others to his assistance.

Brother Leachman took a violent cold from riding on horseback some twenty-five or thirty miles through a very tedious storm, in January, which prostrated him and developed alarming symptoms, but from this prostration he partially recovered, and ventured out in the yard of his house to do some work which was needed; as the ground was wet, and the weather uncomfortable, he was taken down with more alarming symptoms than before, congestion and inflammation of the bowels, in which for weeks he could retain no nourishing food on his stomach. He suffered severe pain, and became very much reduced both in flesh and strength. But very slight hopes were entertained of his recovery for several weeks. Through his illness his mind was stayed on God, his hope and confidence were firm and unshaken to the end, and he remarked to us, when on our former visit, that during his sickness his principal comfort had been in the contemplation of the sovereignty of God. Before his death he selected to be sung at his funeral the 15th hymn of our Baptist Book:

"Keep silence, all created things,
And wait your Maker's nod," etc.

He said to a brother, he had heard much said about it being hard to die; but he found it harder to live.

"Fearless he entered death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus' blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise."

Sister Leachman, who had not left his bedside scarcely for a moment, seems broken down with grief and exhaustion. May God sustain and comfort her in this hour of deep affliction, and may those who so dearly loved our brother, remember his widow, and see that she lacks no comfort they are able to supply.

He leaves one brother, who attended faithfully on him, and two sisters, one of whom is in Georgia, the other has been with him throughout his sickness, showing a sisterly regard and rendering all the service in her power. He had no children. Of his other relatives in the flesh our knowledge is limited. But in the churches of our faith, no one has occupied a higher place, and his death has overwhelmed many in grief and sorrow.

At his funeral, in submission to the wishes expressed by the deceased and his family, we preached to a solemn assembly, from Revelation 20:11,12. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in those books, according to their works."

We have been intimately acquainted with our dead departed brother ever since he became a Baptist, about thirty years ago, and we are the only surviving minister who set him apart by solemn ordination to the gospel ministry more than thirty years ago. We have traveled thousands of miles in company, and, with the exception of the dark days of the late war, there has no year passed in which we have not been together at several of our associations. It has never been our unhappy lot to differ on any point of doctrine or order, nor

has there ever existed between us the least dissatisfaction or abatement of sincere love and fellowship. Our dear brother was, since January, in the 58th year of his age.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 366 – 370

ELDER SAMUEL TROTT: DIED AT AGE 83.

Elder Samuel Trott has laid off his armor, received his passport, and gone, as we fully believe, to the bosom of his God and Savior. For several months his strength has been gradually declining; so much so as to prevent him from visiting the churches, as he has been confined to his house or immediate neighborhood ever since last May. At that time we met him at the Baltimore Association, where we heard him for the last time, preach a short but very impressive sermon from John 3:3, “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” His voice was feeble, and his physical power scarcely sufficient to support his debilitated frame. He remarked that that was in all probability the last time he should ever attempt to preach to us. But the ardor of his spirit arose to an irrepressible earnestness, in solemnly impressing upon the brethren the important doctrine of his text, that whatever amount of human wisdom, literary acquirements, or human talent a man may possess, or however sound in theory, none are competent to preach the gospel of Christ, who have not seen the kingdom; and none can possibly see that kingdom who are not born of the Spirit. His last solemn admonition to the saints on this important subject fell upon our ears, and sank deep in our hearts, as our dear aged father was summing up in a few words what had been the burden of his ministry for more than sixty years. His stand point, bordering on the verge of the eternal world, with the eye of faith uplifted to the glory of the upper skies, and wings expanded for his rapturous flight from earth, only waiting to pronounce the finishing sentences of the ministry which he had received of the Lord, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. If we

mistake not that was the last time he in a formal manner attempted to preach. But as long as he continued in the flesh, he ceased not, as opportunity presented and his receding strength would allow, to speak of his Redeemer's kingdom, and to talk of his power.

We called on and spent a night with our dear brother in August last, in company of Elders Leachman and Durand, after the close of the Corresponding Meeting in Loudoun County, Va.

In our last interview, as far as strength would permit, he reaffirmed the position he had so long held, and the testimony he had so long and faithfully born to the truth of prophecy, and of what he had understood to be its import.

To us, his clear and lucid interpretation of those prophecies concerning the twelve hundred and sixty days of the papal beast, and the corresponding time of the two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, was wonderful. And that he should have published his views nearly forty years ago, and that he lived to see that his views were correct, in the literal humiliation of the pope, and extinction of his temporal, or secular power, just twelve hundred and sixty years after the inauguration of that power in the year 606, is evidence that he was endowed with more light upon these subjects than had ordinarily been enjoyed by his contemporaries.

We have been personally acquainted with our dear departed brother about *45* years, and from our earliest acquaintance, have looked up to him as to a father, for counsel, and instruction, which he has been enabled to give. We have always found him ready to speak a seasonable word to us when occasion has required. Like David and Jonathan, we have loved each other; facing the same foes, bearing the same testimony, engaged in the same conflicts and

participating in the same victories, suffering the same reproaches, encountering the same persecutions for the truth’s sake. Is it strange, now that he is taken from us, that we should exclaim, as did Elisha, when he saw Elijah taken up to heaven in the fiery chariot? “My father! My father! the chariot of Israel, and the horseman thereof.”

More than an ordinary tribute to the memory of this dear servant of God is due from us, and a very large space in our columns should be devoted to a becoming notice of his departure. No other correspondent has contributed so liberally to our columns from the first number of our first volume, until prevented from writing, first by the late war, and since the war, for debility. Indeed it is doubtful if we could have succeeded in sustaining our publication had he withheld his support; and now that his pen shall no longer write for our edification, it is meet that we should record how greatly we have been aided by him, and how sadly the announcement of his departure has fallen on us.

Elder Daniel L. Harding, who was present with our dear brother R. C. Leachman at the funeral of brother Trott, has brought the sad tidings to us, that on Tuesday, October 30, 1866, brother Trott breathed his last, being about 83 years of age.

An appropriate obituary will be prepared by brother Leachman, as we understand, which will be inserted when received.

Brother Trott leaves a widow and one daughter, and has one surviving son residing in Texas. His first wife and all his children, except the one son and one daughter, had been called away before him. With our dear bereaved sister Trott, and the surviving daughter, who were with him to the last, we most sincerely sympathize in this, their deep affliction,

and may their sore bereavement be sanctified to their good, and may they, with the absent son, be divinely sustained by the strong arm of the Lord. To the churches of our order, especially those who have enjoyed the labors of the departed, we would speak words of consolation. It is the Lord, and he is able to comfort you, in this and in all your sorrows. Look up to him and pray him to send forth faithful laborers into his harvest.

To the readers of the "Signs of the Times": we shall greatly miss that familiar signature and those deeply edifying epistles of love, which, for thirty-four years have afforded so much instruction and comfort. But our God hath raised up many other witnesses, and has assured us that he will not leave himself without witnesses. Long will you cherish the memory of our dear departed brother.

To our brethren in the ministry: a valiant soldier has laid aside his armor; a veteran has received his passport to his mansion in the skies; our hearts are saddened, because the places that knew him once shall know him no more; but he is not dead, but sleepeth. His trials and conflicts are over, and all his tears are wiped forever away. A few more days of trial, temptation and conflict remains for us to fill up, and then, like him, shall we close our weary eyes on all the vanities of earth, and go to dwell forever with the Lord.

The 1252 hymn, of our Baptist Hymn Book, seems to us so very appropriate, we are constrained to copy it, in the conclusion of this article.

In hope of life eternal given,
Behold, a pardon'd sinner dies;
A chosen blood-bought heir of heaven,
Called to his mansion in the skies.

He left the world, with all its toys,
For better, brighter worlds on high:
His faith embrac'd substantial joys,
Soaring beyond the starry sky.

From Pisgah's top, by faith, he saw
The land where milk and honey flows;
Nor can the power of hell below,
Prevail to break his sweet repose.

He trod the shades of gloomy death,
Could set his seal that God was true;
Finish'd his course, and kept the faith,
And died with glory full in view.

Methinks I see him now at rest,
In the bright mansion love ordain'd;
His head reclined on Jesus' breast,
No more by sin or sorrow pain'd.

Why should our eyes with sorrow flow,
Our bosoms heave the painful sigh!
When Jesus calls, the saint must go,
'Tis his eternal gain to die.

'Twas through the strength of Israel's King
He proved a conqueror when he fell;
'Tis to the praise of grace we sing,
Though of the dying saint we tell.

Fearless he enter'd death's cold flood,
In peace of conscience clos'd his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus' blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise.

Since the foregoing was in type, we have received the following obituary, written by brother Leachman, in which he

proposes for us to prepare a biography of our deceased brother. We are very certain that such an article as would do justice to the subject would be highly appreciated by all our readers, and if no one more competent shall perform the sad duty, we will, as soon as we can command the time to examine our files and other documents, do the best we can.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1866.

Dear Brother Beebe: Our aged and beloved brother, Samuel Trott, quietly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus on Tuesday morning, October 30th, at his residence in Fairfax Co., Va., in the 83rd year of his age, leaving a widow, (his second wife) and only two living children, one of them in Texas.

Where ever the "Signs of the Times" has circulated, from the commencement of its publication, the name of S. Trott has been familiar to every reader; and generally at the end of some communication worth far more to every lover of truth than the subscription price of the paper. I feel that no language that I can employ can contribute aught to his worth, and I have not the materials at hand to enable me to furnish a correct biographical sketch. But as you are more familiar with his ministerial history than perhaps any one else, and have all the back volumes of the "Signs" to refer to, it is the wish of the family, in which I unite, that you should prepare and publish such an article as to you may seem proper. He has been actively engaged in the ministry for more than sixty years. It was not with him as, alas! it is with too many, a work of convenience or of secondary importance, but regarded as the great and leading business of his life. Through sunshine and storm, winter and summer, he was faithful to his appointments, and seemed to be always laden with gospel treasure. No man seemed to feel more sensibly

his dependence upon God, and not seemed to be more constantly furnished unto every good word and work. To a naturally strong and logical mind he had added a liberal education, and a rich endowment of spiritual gifts rarely found combined in the same individual. I remember with virtuous pride and heartfelt pleasure that twenty-nine years ago he buried unworthy me in the baptismal grave; that two years later in connection with others, he ordained me to the work of the ministry; that we have traveled many thousand miles together, and I have heard him preach more discourses than I have any other man, and I think I can truly say that I never heard him preach that he did not say something I had never heard him say before. It was my privilege and pleasure to hear the last discourse he ever publicly preached, which was at the Baltimore Association in May last, from the words, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," and it seems to me then like a voice from the grave rebuking the foul spirit of fanaticism, and testifying that the boasted and boastful religion of the times amounted to nothing, and was no substitute for being born again.

Brother Trott was in many respects a remarkable man; with the meekness and simplicity of Moses he combined the boldness and independence of Paul.

While always ready and willing to profit by the views of the least, he was yet able to instruct the greatest among the children of God. While such was the simplicity of his character, that the child could approach him, the aged and infirm stood in awe before him. If any man in modern times deserved the appellation of father in Israel, surely he did. Never remarkable for large ingatherings in the church with which he stood connected, yet he has left a record and a testimony which can but tell upon future and unborn generations. He has cast bread upon the waters, which shall be seen after many days.

It is generally known that brother Trott has been looking for important events to transpire, in the course of the present year, in connection with the destruction of the man of sin, and it is a little remarkable that his own death should occur at the very time that he was looking so confidently for the development of some of those mysterious things brought to view in the book of Revelation. Yet it was some satisfaction that he lived to see the published report that the Pope of Rome had about lost all his temporal power. But I will not enlarge upon this and desire not to anticipate the article expected from your much more able pen, but would simply remark that he remained firm to the last, in the conviction that his views upon these important subjects were in the main correct. He might err in some unimportant details, and the changes that have been made in the measurement of time might vary the period, but of the general results, and their speedy accomplishment, he seemed to have no doubt. His last moments were marked by no special demonstration. Yet his death was just such a one as I would wish to die; with no particular disease, his body not racked with pain, his mental powers in full exercise to the last expression he was able to give, he quietly fell asleep like an infant in its mother’s arms.

A discourse was preached at his funeral, to a large and solemn assembly, from Genesis 49:33, “And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people.”

Brother D. L. Harding was providentially present, and made some appropriate remarks. We shall see his face and hear his voice no more, but there are many of the children of God that never can forget him while life and mind endure. Yours lone and sad.

R.C. Leachman. Manassas, Va.
November 3, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 409 - 415

ELDER THOMAS BARTON.

Since we published the obituary of our dear departed brother as written by Mr. Baldwin; we have received a letter from sister Susan Alexander, the daughter of the deceased, requesting us to prepare a suitable notice for publication. We presume this letter was written, and request made before the family were aware that Mr. Baldwin had already prepared one which was published. Sister Alexander has furnished some interesting incidents which were not stated in the obituary, as published in our last number. Without any intention to depreciate or disparage the notice already published, we will, from our personal and intimate acquaintance with the deceased, and from materials furnished by his daughter, say.

Elder Thomas Barton, was born September 10th 1787, and died March 23rd 1870, being 83 years, six months, and thirteen days old when he finished his course. He received a hope in Christ, at an early period of life, and was baptized on profession of his faith, in the year 1810, and united with the Old School Baptists, with whom he continued in full communion to the end of his pilgrimage. Soon after his baptism, his brethren discovered in him a gift for the gospel ministry, and although he manifested much fear and trembling, he yielded to the authority of the church and was publicly set apart by solemn Ordination, about March, 1812. From that time he was actively engaged in the work of the ministry. If we mistake not he was pastor of the Navy Yard Baptist church in the city of Washington D.C. at about 1820, and probably until he received and accepted a call to the pastoral care of the London Tract Old School Baptist church in Pa., in the fall of 1824, which charge he retained until he was called to lay his armor off. At about the same time he accepted the pastorate of the Rock Spring Church, in Lancaster Co. Pa., and in 1838, or 1839, assumed the

pastoral care of the Welsh Tract church, in New Castle County Delaware, which is one of the oldest Baptist churches in the United States. From that time his ministerial labors were principally divided among the three churches, and he was enabled to serve them faithfully until very near the close of his life. He labored in the ministry fifty eight years, always to the satisfaction of the churches, and if during all that time, any stain or shadow of a blemish has ever rested on his character, as a humble christian, a faithful and able minister, or as a man, we have never heard of it; though intimately acquainted with him for about fifty years. We have always regarded him as an able, bold, and uncompromising defender of the truth and equally so in exposing and opposing error. In preaching, his address was mild, engaging and very pleasant, commanding the respectful attention of his hearers. His arguments were strong, clear and conclusive; the advocates of error were frequently made to quail and dread the keen edge of his Jerusalem blade so skillfully wielded in his public ministry. At the meeting of the Baltimore Association about forty years ago, and a short time before the division of that association, he was the first who publicly opposed the heresies of Andrew Fuller, which at that time were very popular with those who were inclining to arminianism, and his faithful exposure of the plausible fallacies of that system was probably the first effective movement which led to and resulted in the final separation of the children of the bond woman from the children of the free woman. In 1832, Brother Barton attended the convention which was held at Black Rock, Maryland, at which time and place an address was prepared and published protesting against all the innovations which were being introduced among the Baptists, by the Fullerite and Missionary party which had crept into some of our churches. Of all the ministers who attended that meeting and signed the protest, brother Burton was, until his death, the only survivor, except the writer of this biographical sketch.

Strong efforts where made by the new school party to induce him to unite with them. They appealed to his vanity. Made him a "Director" of one of their pet institutions, and sent him his commission, but they were greatly mistaken in their man. He was not to be captivated by flattering titles. He replied, that if he had any directions to give in the matter, it would be expressed in the words of Jehu, in reference to Jezebel, to "take the cursed woman and bury her; for she was a king's daughter." II Kings 9:34.

Brother Barton's pastoral qualifications were excellent, his exemplary walk, unblemished character, wise counsels, faithful admonitions, together with his social and agreeable manners were such as to relieve the most timid from embarrassment in approaching him. He always had words of comfort for the tried and afflicted, of instruction for those who were enquiring after the truth, and as a disciplinarian, he was perhaps not surpassed by any.

His last days, as we are informed by his daughter and also by a letter from brother J.R. Rees, which we received since the foregoing was written, were marked by a spirit of childlike submission to his heavenly Father's will. He had suffered much for many years from Erysipelas, especially in the hot seasons of the year. On the 5th day of June last, he was attacked with Typhoid Pneumonia, and for three weeks his life was despaired of, but he was so far restored as to be able to be about the house, and hopes where cherished that he might again be able to resume his appointments; but it was otherwise ordered. He was at the Meeting house {Welsh Tract} several times, and once took a text and preached a short sermon, although he was then suffering from physical weakness. His text on that occasion was, "So he giveth his beloved sleep." Psa. 127:2. At the last yearly meeting in October last, when we were present, he was in attendance a part of the time, but very feeble; that was the last time he

was out of the house; from that time he failed fast, and suffered more than any one can tell. The seat of his disease was in his stomach, and in the latter part of January, the dropsy set in, after which he suffered less with his stomach. He continued, with but little change until about ten days before his death. During the last ten days, it was only at intervals that he could talk rationally. In all his sickness the care of the churches, and welfare of Zion was his absorbing theme, and in all the wanderings of his mind he would express something of the kind. He frequently asked his family to read for him; but his nervous system was so much deranged that he could seldom bear it. On one evening his daughter read to him the 23rd Psalm, when he rose up and said, "O how full of preciousness to me."

On Monday before he died, he asked for the bible, and read a chapter, which he had not done before for months. A short time before he died he said, "I want to say, Thy will be done." Yes, he added, "I want to say it, and experience it too." His sufferings were so great he could not converse for some time; but a few minutes before his spirit departed he repeated, as he sat in his chair, a part of the last verse of the 1225 hymn,

"Jesus can make a dying bed,
Feel soft as downy pillows are."

His strength failed before he could finish the verse; and he asked to be laid on the settee, but did not lie there more than a minute, before he asked to be laid on the bed; to which he walked with the assistance of brother Alexander, his son-in-law, and in about five minutes, and at about fifteen minutes before 5 o'clock a.m., his spirit departed for the bright world above, where pain and sorrow, sickness and death are felt and feared no more.

On Sunday after he had fallen asleep, his funeral was attended at the London Tract Meeting house; Elders Hartwell, Rittenhouse and Grafton were present, and all took part in the solemn exercises. Elder Hartwell preached a very comforting sermon from Job 19:25, “For I know that my Redeemer liveth,” &c. This text had been selected for the occasion by our deceased brother, and the 68th hymn was also selected by him, and was sung, and hymn #1252, was also read. Elder Grafton led in the opening, and Elder Rittenhouse in the closing prayer.

“Fearless he entered death’s cold flood,
In peace of conscience closed his eyes;
His only trust was Jesus’ blood,
In sure and certain hope to rise.”

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1870.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

ELECTION.

Elder Beebe: I desire your views on the election of God's children. Were they elected at the beginning, or not until they were convened to God? The doctrine here is that they are not elected until they are convened; but I cannot so understand it. I therefore ask for your views, or the views of some of your corespondents on the subject.

H. Phillips. Union Co., Ohio.
April 1, 1867.

Reply: It is well for the children of God, that their election does not rest on the views which may be entertained by uninspired men. Whatever men think or preach cannot change what God has spoken by his prophets and apostles on the subject. Holy men have spoken as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost. Unholy men have contradicted the testimony of divine inspiration, and spoken against it as they are inspired by the devil. Our Lord Jesus Christ has informed us that the Spirit of Truth, which he would send them, is a Spirit which the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not; neither knoweth him (John 14:17). Also he has said that when the devil "speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44)." And to the saints God has given a rule by which they know the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of error. It is this - they that are of the world, speak of the world, and the world heareth them, "We" (the apostles) "are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error (I John 4:6)." This rule is infallible, clear, plain and directly to the point: let us apply it. The apostle says "But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through

sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth (II Thessalonians 2:13).” What he means by the beginning is explained in Ephesians 1:1,3-6: “To the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

All who hear the apostles believe that God chose or elected his people in Christ before the foundation of the world, and these, the apostles say, know God. All who deny this doctrine, and who believe and advocate its opposite, are not of God, but are manifestly of the world, and are led by the spirit of error, which spirit of error is the devil, for he is, as we have proved, a liar and the father of lies.

No force of truth can convince them of the error they are in, for they are under chains of darkness, and the Savior says they *cannot* receive the Spirit of Truth because they see him not, neither do they know him.

Those whom God has quickened by his Spirit, and delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the marvelous light of the Sun of Righteousness, and those only, are manifestly of the class whom God hath from the beginning chosen unto salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. All others are under “strong delusion that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:11,12).” “(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or

evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, [Rebecca], The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated (Romans 9:11-13).” “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy (Romans 9:16).” “Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor (Romans 9:18-21)?”

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 27 – 29

END OF VOLUME ELEVEN.

WITH this number we close the present volume of our publication, and we would desire to return unfeigned thanks to our heavenly Father, that he has not only spared our life, but also sustained us through the labors of the receding year. With what success we have labored is not for u to say; but we indulge the hope that our labor has not been altogether in vain. We have heard of some of the poor of the flock of Jesus who have been comforted, encouraged, edified and built up in their most holy faith by the communications of our correspondents through our columns. Information concerning each other has been communicated and received, greatly to the consolation of our brethren generally, and the bonds of union and christian fellowship have been greatly strengthened.

We have had many obstacles to encounter: but, as we trust, through him that has loved us, we have surmounted them all; and are now prepared to commence and prosecute the labors of the next volume with such ability and success as our Lord shall please. Our hearty thanks we tender to those brethren and friends, in all the states, who have kindly aided us, both by the extension of the circulation of our paper, and by their contributions to fill up our columns with interesting matter. And although many of our subscribers have been tardy, both in writing and making payments, such has been the promptness of others as to enable us to bear up under the pressure of embarrassments. We sincerely hope that all our delinquent subscribers will bear in mind that we need what is due us from them to enable us to meet the demands of our creditors.

We hope that our former patrons will still continue their support to this paper; but such as do not design to continue

to aid us, will please give us immediate notice. To those who may favor us with their continued subscriptions, we can only pledge ourself, that so far as God shall give us ability, no pains nor reasonable expense shall be wanting on our part to render our paper worthy of their patronage.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
December 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 371 – 372

END OF VOLUME TWELVE

WITH this number we complete twelve years' toil and labor in the publication of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. To pretend that perfection has adorned our labors, or that we have nothing to regret of human frailty in the discharge of our duty to our patrons, would be vain and presumptuous; but, under all the circumstances connected, we have, as we believe, been able to give general satisfaction to our Old School Baptist brethren, for whose especial service this publication was first brought into being. A careful retrospect of the past will show what service to the cause of truth has been rendered by the semi-monthly visits of our paper. Among those, not the least important, we may name the seeking out of our scattered brethren, and introduction of those residing far distant, to each other, and opening for them a convenient and cheap medium of correspondence. When we contemplate the pleasure of christian correspondence, how frequently the hearts of brethren and friends of Zion have been made glad by the reception of good news from a far country, the relief experienced by brethren and churches, placed in trying circumstances, from the condolence, advice and hearty greeting of sympathizing brethren and churches, the opportunity of setting forth gospel truth, and of defending the truth publicly from the foul aspersions of those who have publicly attacked it, the facility of increasing light by a friendly and judicious discussion of difficult objects involving the doctrine, order and practice of the gospel and the gospel church, and the opportunity afforded of warning the saints in all parts of the country of the movements of the alien army, we feel assured that our labors have not been altogether in vain.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
December 15, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 509 – 510

END OF VOLUME THIRTY

With this number we complete our Thirtieth Volume. According to the general estimation of the longevity of mankind, in this period of the world, a generation has filled up the measure of its days, and passed away, never more to return to the transitory scenes of time, since we commenced our labors in conducting the publication of our humble sheet. We have neither the time or space to sum up all the changes which thirty years have wrought, what numbers who patronized us in the commencement have finished their course on earth, and have gone to their destiny in the world of spirits. Many of our valued correspondents have written their last communication for our columns, their labors of love are completed, - and many who extended to us their wishes for our success, in what thirty years ago seemed to be a hazardous undertaking, have also passed away - but others still survive who have steadily, faithfully, and kindly sustained us throughout the whole period, are still preserved. We also may, with propriety, record a change in regard to ourselves. In the prime of life, being but about thirty-one years of age at the commencement of this publication, we have become old and infirmed, yet blessed with a good degree of health, and we have great reason to thank God for his preserving goodness and sustaining power manifested in sparing our life, and in all the deliverances he has so graciously bestowed upon us.

In regard to the history of our paper, but few of our readers need to be informed as most of them have observed that we have not enjoyed uninterrupted tranquillity, nor altogether escaped the perplexities and trials to which our position has exposed us. But it is our happiness to say that the Lord has been very gracious, and we are still preserved.

The calamitous war which is now raging in our country has had a very depressing effect on our circulation, depriving us of all that portion of our subscribers south of the disputed lines, and has rendered our facilities for supplying our paper regularly to those of our subscribers who live in some of the border States, very precarious, on account of the frequent interruption of our mails, has greatly reduced our number of subscribers, and the effects of the war has been felt severely by many in our Northern States, who are deprived of the means of making their wonted remittances. These causes, together with the greatly increased expense of publishing, and the depreciation of our paper currency, would suggest the propriety of suspending the publication for the present, were it not for the fact that in such trying times its publication is more imperiously demanded than at other times. When war is devastating our country, and few families escape the loss of some cherished member, while the lowering clouds gather blackness, and a general gloom is depicted on the countenance of those who love peace: and while the former facilities for private correspondence is, to a great degree, cut off, Christians who have formerly enjoyed the privilege of speaking often to each other, through the "Signs of the Times" would regard it as a severe calamity if, in addition to all their other trials, they should be deprived of the consolation of hearing from each other through this medium of correspondence.

However hard the times may press upon the brethren, this is undoubtedly the more economical method of corresponding. Our letter can, through this medium, be read by several thousands, and each number will, in return, bring to the writer several letters of profitable and, in these times, cheering correspondence from various parts of the country.

But, after all that may be said by us on the subject, it is for our brethren, sisters, and friends to say whether, under all

the circumstances, the privilege of hearing from each other twice a month, from all accessible parts of our country, is worth to them the expense of One Dollar a year, and, as they shall elect, we shall be governed.

Before we close this article, we wish to return our grateful acknowledgments to our former patrons, and also to those have favored us with their correspondence; and, as many of those who have contributed liberally in former times to fill up our columns, have either been called home to their crowns of immortality, or are so situated, by the belligerent condition of our States, as to prevent them from presenting to us their letters of love and fellowship, the Lord has graciously raised up others to fill up the ranks, and supply profitable and interesting correspondence, so that we have no reason to doubt that the forth coming volume will be fully as interesting and edifying as any which have preceded it.

Middletown, N.Y.,
December 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 302 - 303

Entering Rest

Reply to Sister Walker, on Hebrews 4:1,2.

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." Hebrews 4:1,2.

The inspired writer in comparing the typical with the gospel dispensation, shows that the former, although a carnal people, having but a worldly sanctuary, were with their ordinances and service figurative, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very [or exact] image of the things to which they pointed, could never make, with their perpetual sacrifices, the comers to their altars perfect; but still they bore a striking typical resemblance to the things which they prefigured.

Israel under the first covenant were typical of the spiritual Israel, whose circumcision is not outward in their flesh, but inward, in their hearts, not made with hands, but in the spirit, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Their consecration as the people of God, chosen in the flesh of Abraham, and heirs of the promised rest, in the land of Canaan, was beautifully emblematic of the spiritual seed of Christ, which were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and in their relation to him, heirs of an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away. In all that is written of the carnal Israel, something may be found pointing to corresponding realities in the spiritual, or anti-typical Israel under the new covenant dispensation. Their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and their wearisome journey through the wilderness, and their final rest in the land of Canaan, with their constant

inclination to murmur, and rebel against God, and the judgments visited upon them for their infidelity and idolatry, all foreshadowed the waywardness of the children of God under the gospel dispensation. The failure of the unbelieving Israelites whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, to enter and rest in the promised land of Canaan, is urged as an admonition to the people of God, under the gospel dispensation, to "labor to enter into rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

The rest prefigured by the land of Canaan, and by the Jewish sabbaths, is not, as some have supposed, the state of ultimate happiness which awaits the saints in the consummation of glory, for that ultimatum cannot be dependent in any degree upon contingencies of any kind. Christ has engaged by irrevocable decree to raise up at the last day, to that divine abode, all that his Father has given him. Canaan could not prefigure such a state of uninterrupted blessedness; for there was much fighting, and many sore conflicts to be endured in that land; neither could the Jewish sabbaths, for they were often desecrated, subjecting those who violated them to pains and penalties, very unlike the perfect security of the saints in glory. But we are informed in the connection of our subject that those times and places of rest under the old covenant, pointed to and typified the rest which remains under the gospel dispensation to the people of God, into which they who believe have entered.

The argument of the inspired writer of our text is that in the type, the Lord swore in his wrath that the unbelieving Israelites should not enter into his rest, so that they could not enter in because of unbelief; thus representing that the rest which is enjoined in the gospel cannot possibly be entered or enjoyed in the absence of faith. As none but those who are born of God have, or possibly can have that faith

which is the fruit of the Spirit, none but they can possibly know experimentally anything of spiritual or gospel rest. And even the saints can only enjoy it when their faith predominates over the infidelity of their nature. On this very account the admonition comes to the saints, - to those holy brethren who are partakers of the heavenly calling, to “fear, lest a promise being left them, of entering into his rest, any of them should seem to come short of it.”

His rest, or the rest which God has promised to his people, is said to be glorious. Not only is it a respite from labor and bondage, but a confident reliance on Christ, as a full and sufficient Savior, on his atoning blood for the remission of our sins, on his perfect righteousness for our justification before God; his Spirit bestowed on us in our new birth, to qualify us to appreciate and enjoy spiritual things; a firm reliance on his promises, and a complete cessation from all our own legal works, and legal thoughts. Such a rest is promised to the people of God, and that promise is left on record for them. “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” - Matthew 11:28,29. While the wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, our Lord giveth his beloved rest. That this rest is provided for the people of God, and that the premise of entering it is left for the comfort of the people of God, is certain. Why then are we admonished to fear lest those unto whom it is promised should seem to come short of it? Every child of God while in the flesh knows what this liability means. Such is the nature of the rest, that it is only entered and enjoyed when and while we believe. Whenever our doubts and fears prevail, we are tossed with tempest, and not comforted; labor, toil and unrest, weariness, fainting and distress will certainly come upon us. How can we rest upon a promise which faith does lay hold on and appropriate to us? God gave a promise of rest in the land

of Canaan to the Hebrews, but it was seldom they relied on that promise while in the wilderness. When God made for them a wondrous pathway through the Red Sea, or displayed some wonderful power in their deliverance, they were for the moment satisfied that God would fulfill his promises; but when their way was intercepted by dangers and difficulties, they invariably murmured and said that they were brought into the wilderness to die. How very like the murmuring tribes are we, when by some signal display of God's delivering power, our faith rises above our fears, we feel strong in the Lord, and confess how slow of heart we have been to believe. Yet while believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then we find the place where he feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon. But as soon as the gathering clouds appear, and hide the sun from our sight, we recall our doubts and fears, and sometimes even doubt that we have ever seen the sun, or known its light. Do we not at such times seem to come short of the promised rest?

The admonition, “Let us therefore fear,” is not that we should cherish doubts and nurse our unbelief; but resist them; for it is said in verse 11, “Let us labor therefore to enter into rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.” The example referred to is that of the carnal Hebrews in the type; they could not enter into Canaan because of unbelief. Nor can we enter into our spiritual rest while we cherish our doubts and fears. It is impossible for us to rest, only in a confident unwavering reliance on our God. Whether the people of God enjoy it or not, that rest remaineth for them. Do any of the tried and tempted, doubting, fearing, trembling saints enquire how they are to labor to enter into it? To such we say, it is not by searching for some good thing in your flesh, or fleshly nature; for Paul himself could not find it there. Not by looking to Mount Sinai; for if so much as a beast should touch that mountain it must die. The law is a

ministration of death. Not by making a pilgrimage to the empty sepulchre of the dear Redeemer; you will not find him there; for he has risen. Seek not for the living among the dead. Our glorious Leader has given us directions. He says, “Come unto me.” Come away from Sinai, come away from yourself, come away from everything else. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. To perform such labor as this, you not only need to have life, but he who calls you unto him commands you to take on you his yoke. You cannot rest under the yoke of bondage which entangled the Galatian saints; for no yoke but that of Jesus is easy, no burden but his is light. How can you labor to advantage unless you put on his yoke? And when in his yoke, equally yoked with believers, you have confessed your allegiance to him, then "learn of him." He will teach you as never man taught. He is meek, and will teach you to be meek; he is lowly, and will teach you lessons of humility; and in that meek and lowly spirit which you learn of Jesus, as God is true, you shall find rest to your soul.

Now remember all that faith which is indispensable to gospel rest is of God; it is the faith of the Son of God, and the fruit of his Spirit of which you are born again, and without which it is impossible to please God. And all that infidelity, unbelief, doubts, fears and lack of confidence which disturbs, disquiets and distresses you, is of your own carnal nature. When faith lifts up her eyes to the eternal hills, joy, peace and rest possesses your heart; you forget yourself, lost in the contemplation of eternal things, and like Paul when elevated to the third heaven, you are so perfectly stripped of all selfishness that you are unconscious of having a body, or whether in it or not you cannot tell. But when doubts and unbelief prevail, then you know where the body is, and you begin to worry and fret about yourself. The way of salvation by grace looks lovely and beautiful, but, O, says old self, how do I know that I have any interest in it? What is that to thee?

Faith leaves that all with the Lord; and we venture the assertion that no child of Grace ever entered into gospel rest, except when his faith was sufficiently strong to leave all personal interest with God. Faith says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." - Isaiah 26:3,4.

When our confidence in God is firm and unshaken, we rest in that confidence. But when we doubt and fear, and even dispute all that he has ever done for us, we become restless and comfortless. In our firm reliance on God, on his promises, on his work that he has wrought in us, we sweetly and peacefully rest; but when we are tempted to distrust in God, and indulge our doubts and fears, we seem to come short of that rest. And when we consider the strong and constant tendency of our carnal minds to doubt and dispute what God has said and what he has done, do we not find that we have reason to fear that our rest will be broken? "Let us therefore fear" such insidious and treacherous propensities of our carnal or fleshly minds. These are what the word admonishes us to fear, for these are what invade, disturb and prevent our rest, so that although we have the promise and oath of God who cannot lie, to rest upon, we seem to come short, and do indeed often come far short of that rest which such gracious promises are sufficient to secure.

"For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them." To them the promise of temporal rest was preached; and the preaching of the gracious promises of God is gospel preaching; but gospel preaching cannot bring rest and assurance to those who do not believe. The Hebrews could not be profited by the preaching of the promises when they had no faith in them, and did not believe them; they were not mixed with faith in them. It is even so with christians now under the gospel dispensation. Unless we have faith and

that faith predominating over our doubts, we cannot be profited in a way of rest when we hear the gospel preached. We will ask the doubting, fearing, trembling christian, how has it been with you? You have heard the promises preached, they have seemed great and precious. Did they bring you rest? O no. Why? Because I could not believe they were for me. Well then you could not enter into rest, because of unbelief. You saw that they were blessed provisions for somebody, and longed to be that somebody. So instead of entering into rest, you seemed to come short of it. Can you find any other reason why you could not rest in the preached word, but your lack of faith and confidence to appropriate its consolation to your own case? The promise, you heard preached to the weary and heavy laden, and you were weary and heavy laden; but you did not feel satisfied that it was for you. It was preached to all who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; you had an ear to hear it preached to the churches, - you saw and were fully satisfied that it was for the churches of the saints; but your unbelief told you that it was not for you, and so you failed to rest upon it, or to be comforted by it, because of your unbelief. The promises to the carnal Israelites, which were typical of the gospel, did not profit that carnal people, because they had no faith to believe them, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness - and they entered not into the goodly land of rest. And have we not reason to fear there are thousands of God's dear children, who are born of the Spirit, who love the truth, who have an ear to hear, and who desire above all things to be numbered among, and in fellowship with the children of God, whose mortal bodies fall in the wilderness, without ever entering into the church in her gospel organization? Not so; not because the laws and order of the kingdom of Christ forbids them; not because they do not love her gates, and earnestly long for the milk and honey which forever flows within her sacred borders; but simply because they listen to and are swayed by the infidelity of their own

carnal minds, and reject the testimony of God. To all such a promise is surely left of entering into his rest; and although we see them hugging their chains and fetters, and, like Rachel, refusing to be comforted, still the promise is none the less unto them, and to their children, and unto all them which are afar off; yet they seem to come short of it. That is, of resting upon it, by entering in through the gates into the city, where they may have right to the tree of life, but continue to remain without among the dogs and sorcerers, and other bad companions. But the enquiry may be, what is to become of them? We answer, although their unbelief may prevent them from the enjoyment of rest, while here in the flesh, and deprive them of the communion of the church of God, so far at least as to seem to come short of it, still their unbelief cannot make the promises of God of none effect. Notwithstanding all their shortcomings, their spiritual and immortal life is hid with Christ in God. Into the promised rest which their unbelief has disqualified them for the enjoyment while here below, they shall be brought when Christ our Lord in fulfillment of his gracious pledge shall raise them up at the last day.

We would not confine the application of the admonition of our subject to those timid, trembling, doubting children of our God, whose unbelieving doubts and fears prevail to keep them from the bosom of the church, and from the enjoyment of the rest into which believers have entered; for there are very many who have walked for many years in the fellowship of the churches, and who have often witnessed the sweet comfort of resting confidentially and steadfastly on the promises of the gospel, who at times are driven by their doubts, fears and unbelief from their resting place, and are tossed with tempests and not comforted. Their faith is sharply contested by their fears and unbelief; and at all such times they truly seem to come short of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. And they learn by

experience that rest arises with the triumphs of their faith and confiding reliance on the God of their salvation, and declines with the prevalence of their doubts and fears.

Before we close this article, we will remark, that although there is no virtue in doubts and fears, no child of God while in the flesh is altogether free from them; nor is it possible that any but the heaven-born should ever be annoyed with such as we have described. They are the muddy streams which flow unbidden from our carnal nature, and war against the spirit of holiness which God has given to us. They are often excited by the tempter, and sometimes the saints are left to their buffetings, as a wholesome chastisement for our follies, or for the trial of our faith; but from whatever cause they may come, they disturb our repose, and disquiet and trouble the saints. But who ever heard of a hypocrite or unquickened person being troubled in this way? Should we meet with any who have long professed discipleship to Christ, who are strangers to the annoyance of doubts and fears, we could repose no confidence in their profession; and yet because we are troubled with them, what bitter things we write against ourselves.

We are to strive to enter into rest, by fighting valiantly the fight of faith, making war against our unbelief. “To you who are troubled,” the apostle says, “rest with us.” The apostles rested in God, and not in themselves. The direction of God is, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you. “Trust in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” “They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion that cannot be moved, but abideth forever.” Do you believe what God the Lord hath spoken, that he rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky? Do you believe that “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms?”

“Then let the earth's old pillars shake, And all the wheels of nature break, Our steadfast souls shall fear no more, Than solid rocks when billows roar.”

Middletown N.Y.
April 15, 1869
Elder Gilbert Beebe

EPHESIANS I. 4, 5.

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinatd us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

In this heaven-inspired language the apostle implies three characters: First, The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings as having made the choice of which this record testifies. Second, Christ Jesus, in his sonship, as the Son of the God and Father, who has made the choice under consideration. Third, The church or people, so chosen by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with the grand end and design of the choice, that we, (the people chosen,) should be holy and without blame, before him in love. And this choice and predestination to the adoption of children, holy and without blame, is according to the good pleasure of the will of the eternal God.

On this interesting subject volumes might be written; eternal ages, so to speak, will not exhaust the heavenly theme; but at this time our remarks must be very brief. Although Christ, in his official character in the work of salvation occupies a distinct character from the Father, as the Mediatorial Head of his church, still in the unity of the Godhead they are one; hence, in setting forth the choice, we are informed that it is in Christ Jesus, and complete before the foundation of the world, and so perfect from the ancients of eternity, that no more alteration can possibly be made to the choice, in Christ, than can be made to the spiritual blessings treasured in him for us from the same date. As the saints were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according to the choice in him, it

follows, that if one of those chosen in Christ can be diminished from the whole, then so may some of the *all spiritual blessings* bestowed, also fail to take effect. It is heart-cheering to the saints to know that instead of spiritual blessings being offered conditionally according to the good or bad pleasure or volition of our will, all is secured according to the pleasure of the immutable will of Jehovah. The blessings and the choice are in sweet harmony with each other, and both according to the good pleasure of the will of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. In distinction to this, how precarious would be the prospect were it written, that all spiritual blessings were to *be* given, according as men may render themselves deserving of such divine favors from the hand of God. The church chosen in Christ and in him supplied with all spiritual blessings, before the foundation of the world, demonstrates the existence of the Son of God in his Mediatorial relation both to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to that church which was chosen in him, which is his body, and the fullness of him which filleth all in all.

This was and is the plan of God, for making the objects of this choice holy and unblamable in love. Certainly, then, we could not have been so chosen and blessed because we were holy and without blame in ourselves considered; but to make us so in Christ. Arminians and will-worshipers do not think this the best way to secure holiness to the chosen, or to display the wisdom and goodness of God; but all the saints are delighted to know that it is according to the good pleasure of God’s will. And while enemies may charge God with unrighteousness, and may feel more confidence in their own plans and schemes, we know there is no possibility of salvation in any other way.

Having predestinated us. Predestination is first, the choice and all spiritual blessings are established firmly as the throne

of heaven upon that predestination, and all who are so predestinated must assuredly receive the adoption to which God has destined them, or the decrees of God must fail.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 465 – 467

EPHESIANS I. 13.

"In whom ye also *trusted,* after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise."

The first chapter of Ephesians is among the very last chapters on which we would suppose the Arminians would feel disposed to speculate. Not because other portions of the inspired Scripture are less antagonistic to Arminianism, but because this chapter presents the doctrine of God's sovereignty in the election and salvation of his chosen people, in such language as to defy the ingenuity of men or devils to make it appear to say anything favorable to the doctrine of salvation by works. First, in this chapter we are assured that all spiritual blessings were bestowed upon the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus according as God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. Consequently no spiritual blessings have ever been, ever will be, or ever can be added to those with which God has already blessed them in him; and this blessing, including all spiritual blessings, could not possibly have been given on the ground of any merit or goodness in them, because they were blessed according to quite a different standard; according as he hath chosen us in him, Christ, before the foundation of the world. The date of this blessing, including all spiritual blessings, is as ancient, as absolute, as creature-humbling, and as God-honoring, as their election, and both were before the foundation of the world. The Arminians will find it rather a difficult matter to make themselves believe, predisposed as they are to error, that they had done anything to bring God under obligation to bless them, before the foundation of the world. Instead of their having been so blessed in consequence of holiness in them, the blessing in Christ Jesus was that we should be holy, and without blame before God in

love. If therefore, eternal election, and the security of all spiritual blessings to the saints in Christ Jesus before the world began, does not tend to holiness, and absolutely secure, beyond the possibility of a failure, the ultimate holiness and blameless state of all the elect, it will not answer the design which God had in so blessing them. We are therefore compelled to conclude that a blameless state of holiness by the blessing of God, wherewith he blessed his people in Christ, their Head, before the foundation of the world, must certainly follow as a consequence, or else that God was himself mistaken, and failed to secure to them what he intended to. If any are sufficiently heaven-daring to take the position that God's wisdom and omniscience were at fault, and that he was mistaken, and did fail to secure what was his intention in blessing them before the foundation of the world, we ask them what assurance they pretend to have that any blessing of God since the foundation of the world, will be likely to prove any more effectual? If he has failed in one case, may he not in another? Again, we are in this chapter assured that God has predestinated us, (those whom he has blessed with all spiritual blessings, and chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world,) to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto himself. And this predestination and adoption is not according as our works may be, but according to the good pleasure of his will. God's own immutable will is the standard of this predestination, and indeed he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And we are expressly informed that he is without variableness or the shadow of turning. Still farther, we are assured in this chapter that the adoption of those who are thereunto by him predestinated, shall be to the praise of the glory of God's grace. Should this predestination and this adoption fail, must there not also be a failure of that revenue of praise unto the glory of God's grace, which was contemplated by him, in so predestinating them? Do any inquire, what grace this predestinated adoption is to be to

the praise of the glory of? The answer is given, it is that grace wherein he, God, has made us accepted in the Beloved. Not that in which we have made ourselves accepted by our works, or in our Adamic nature. Nor is it a kind of grace wherein God proposes or intends to make the adopted accepted or acceptable; but that grace wherein he has made us accepted, out of ourselves and in the Beloved. But in what Beloved has God made his blessed and chosen and predestinated children accepted? In that very Beloved in whom we have (not in whom we are going to have, or may have) redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins. And all this according to what? Not according to the poverty of our good works, but according to the riches of his grace. Not a grace wherein we have commended ourselves to his favor, but that grace wherein he, God, hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence.

This *all wisdom and prudence* is exemplified in God's having made known to the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus, the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself; that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together all things, in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him; in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. That is, that *we,* who first trusted in Christ, namely, the apostles and primitive saints, unto whom Christ was first revealed, should be to the praise of the glory of Christ; and not only those who first trusted, but the Gentiles also, who also trusted in Christ, after that they heard the word of truth. But as the Hebrew disciples first heard the words of truth, the gospel of their salvation, and were first called by grace, born of God, and taught by the Spirit, they first trusted in him in whom the saints which were at Ephesus and the

faithful in Christ Jesus, among the Gentiles, also trusted at a later period. For as the first or primitive disciples did not trust in Christ until they had a knowledge of him, (and to know him is eternal life,) so neither did the Gentile believers at Ephesus trust in him until he was revealed unto them. So far is this from giving any countenance to Arminianism, it completely demolishes their favorite heresy, namely, that faith is a condition or means by which sinners are to be made alive; that God offers us life on condition of our believing.

But our text holds the doctrine that faith to trust in God is a fruit of the Spirit, a gift of God, and a consequence, not a cause, of our being quickened and born of God. When did the saints trust in Christ, before they heard the word of truth, or afterwards? After that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. This is, in substance, what Jesus himself affirmed: “It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.” Not the words spoken to everybody, by anybody, but the immediate communication of Christ the Life, the Head and Fountain of Immortality; in whom life was given to them with all other spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. His sheep hear his voice, he knows them, and he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish. The dead hear his voice, and they that hear shall live; and all because the words which he speaks to them, are spirit and life.

Therefore it is that they are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, (his word, which is spirit and life,) which liveth and abideth forever. After they hear this, his life-giving word, which is to them the gospel of their salvation, and are by it made alive, then, but not till then, do they trust in him. Then they are effectually delivered from all confidence in the flesh, from all dependence on free-will,

free-agency, human power and ability, and every other Arminian refuge of lies; then, stripped of every other dependence, they trust in him alone. They do not drag out a miserable existence, under the fearful apprehension that they may fall from grace and sink down to hell at last; for they are made savingly acquainted with Christ, and they know that he is able to keep that which they have committed to him against that day. They know that he (and not themselves) hath begun the good work, and that he (and not they) will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the holy spirit of promise. All *is in him.*In him they are blessed of the Father with all spiritual blessings; in him chosen or elected before the foundation of the world; in him predestinated to the adoption of children; in him accepted; in him they receive the aboundings of wisdom and prudence; in him they are, in the fullness of the dispensations of times, all gathered together in him; in him have obtained an inheritance according to the purpose of God. The holy spirit of promise, that spirit which was promised, is sent down from heaven to them who are thus quickened, and do thus believe and trust in Christ, and who are partakers of this grace, and it bears witness with their spirit that they are born of God; as a seal is used in testimony, and as the witness of a covenant, a pledge, a promise, &c. So the spirit of adoption which is given them, makes them, in the fullness of the assurance of faith and trust in God, to cry, Abba, Father. Until we believe, or until faith is given us in Christ to trust in him, we cannot cry, Abba, Father; we lack the sealing evidence. A seal makes an impression also on the wax, or on that which is sealed; so those who believe and trust in the Lord Jesus, are prominently marked, and have the seal of God in their foreheads, as John saw and testified in his vision on the isle of Patmos; and they bear the image of their Redeemer, which is by the spirit enstamped on them.

But the spirit of promise particularly designed in this text, is that which is said to be an earnest of their inheritance; and the spirit whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption, or until the final resurrection of our bodies, which shall by it be made spiritual and incorruptible, when God shall raise them up, and change and fashion them, and make them like the glorious body of their risen Redeemer. "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." This spirit of adoption in us is therefore a seal and earnest of the promise of a glorious resurrection and immortality beyond the grave, although we who have it, do now groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. Not before we were quickened, born of God, and made the recipients experimentally of the faith of God's elect; but after this development and manifestation is made, we exhibit the impress of this seal, and thereby are enabled to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. This seal is defined by the inspired writer of our text, as the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. The bodies of the saints are bought with a price, and are spoken of as a purchased possession; the price has already been paid, but the redemption of them includes their deliverance from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Hence the spirit of adoption, when given to us, is a sealing assurance of that final deliverance from corruption, which we shall realize when the promise shall be fulfilled in the resurrection of our bodies from the dead; for then they shall put on incorruption, and be clothed in immortality, and by adoption take their place among the children. Now we are informed, Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom, neither can corruption inherit incorruption; but the spirit with which we are sealed, promises that they shall be changed, and made like unto Christ's glorious body; all impediments will then be removed,

death will be swallowed up of life, and the bodies quickened with spiritual and immortal life; and so prepared to dispense with the earthly sustenance which they now require, and to live on spiritual and immortal food, and suited to the heavenly element; they will be capacitated to enjoy the glories of that immortal state which God has prepared for them. Seeing, then, that we are bought with a price, and consequently are not our own, let us endeavor to glorify God, in our bodies and in our spirits which are his.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 11 - 16

Ephesians 2:5

Brother Beebe: – Will you give us your views on Ephesians 2:5. “Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).”

Isaac Briscoe.

Alexandria, DC.
Feb. 15, 1839

In reply to our brother, we will say, Such as we have, we will give; and certainly nothing more can reasonably be required at our hands. We understand the apostle in this epistle to a Gentile church, and with them, to all the faithful in Christ Jesus, to be laboring to show that all spiritual blessings result to us from the fixed purpose and determinate decrees of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will; and flowing to the heirs of promise in precise accordance with the doctrine of election — “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.” And having in the first chapter brought to view the firm, immutable and everlasting basis of our hope for life and salvation, dwells, in the immediate connection of our text, on the quickening power of God, in reference to the execution of His eternal and unfrustrable design in the salvation of His people. In the passage presented for consideration, the saints are spoken of as being quickened together with Christ, and saved by grace. We presume the following considerations are fairly involved in the subject before us, viz:

First. The life which the saints had in Christ before they fell in Adam. That the saints had any personal individual existence other than that which was given them in Christ, we shall not contend; but that they existed as the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head, is as clearly proven in the Scriptures, as is

the existence of Christ as Head of His body; and that the body of Christ was created in Christ, as that Eve was created in Adam; and that they were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, and in Him were predestinated to all that they were by Jehovah destined to be, either in time or eternity, is fully implied in the first chapter of this epistle. The omniscient eye could, and did see the substance of Christ (His body) lying in embryo; and in His book all His members were written, when as yet there was none of them. (Psa. 139:16) In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. (John 1:4) Do we inquire, What life was in Him, who was with God, and who was God? The apostle answers: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "When He who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear WITH Him in glory." (Col. 3:3-4) In perfect harmony with this sentiment is the expression of the psalmist: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." (Psa. 91:1) The place where God has hidden the life of His people, must be a secret place and under the shadow, or protection, of the Almighty; and that such a place is the place of the saint's security, (see Deut. 33:27) "The Eternal God is thy refuge," etc. And that such has ever been the spiritual habitation of the saints (see Psa. 91:1-2) "Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations; before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God," etc. As we apprehend no danger of these premises being disputed by any Old School brethren, for brevity's sake we pass.

Second. The cause and nature of alienation, death, etc. In the preceding part of the chapter from which we have our text, the apostle connects our death with our existence in an earthy Adam, or under the law as transgressors thereof; dead, he says, in trespasses and sins. He has elsewhere informed us that sin is a transgression of the law; but where

there is no law there is no transgression. Hence this death has reference to our law state; and consequently to our relationship to an earthly Adam. Now if we were to speak of the first great cause of all causes we would say with the psalmist, (11:3) “Thou turnest men to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men.” Or in the language of the apostle, (Rom 8:20) “For the creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope.” But when speaking as to the procuring cause, on the part of man, we conceive that our alienation from God, and total depravity, and death in sins, is attributable to the introduction of sin into the world. In Romans 5:17, the apostle tells us, that by one man’s offence, death reigned by one. And again in this epistle, (4:18) this apostle attributes our alienation from the life of God to that ignorance which is, to us, in consequence of our depravity by sin. Hence he very justly denominates it a death in trespasses and sins. The nature of our alienation is properly compared to a state of captivity: “All we like sheep have gone astray.” (Isa. 53:6) The law under which we were created in Adam required of us perfect and perpetual obedience; and said in a voice of thunder “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” We had all sinned and come short of the glory of God; hence we fell under the condemning sentence of the law, became lawful captive, were by the law cast into the prison of death, and there held in chains of darkness, without hope, and without God in the world; and, as the apostle here tells us, “That at this time we were without Christ,” (or life —for Christ is our life) “being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,” (Gentiles literally,) and condemned sinners, in the spiritual view of the subject, “and strangers to the covenant of promise.” The covenants of promise made with Abraham, were figurative of the provisions of grace locked up in the cabinet of the divine mind for the heirs of salvation; and in our degradation we were utter strangers to

that provision, and equally so to any other way of life and salvation.

Notwithstanding our captivity, darkness, bondage, guilt and death, we are not to suppose that what was treasured up in Christ for us, had undergone any change; God is immutable; and Jude assures us that the saints which were sanctified by God the Father, were “preserved in Christ Jesus.” (Jude 1) And Paul has named them as the “reserved ones” (Rom. 11:4) and our text, as we propose to show, forbids the notion that God’s love towards us could be abated by any thing which we could do. “Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it.” (SS. 8:7) Nor can all the substance of poor, lost, sinful mortals buy it; it is sovereign, discriminating, eternal, immutable, and invincible. Could we admit that in our fall in Adam, we fell out of Christ, or that the vital relationship of His children to Him, and secured for us in Him before all worlds, we should despair of salvation by Him; for the lawful captive must be lawfully delivered; and by virtue of the eternal indissoluble union; the right of redemption was vested in Christ; and on this principle He came into the world, and was made under the law, (not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it) to redeem them that were under the law. In this relationship He could, and did as truly represent us, in the obedience which He rendered to the divine law, as Adam had represented us in his first transgression of divine authority; hence, says the apostle, “Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so” (or exactly so) “by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for, as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” (Romans 5:18-19)

In the foregoing, we have expressed our views of the life we had in Christ from everlasting, of our fallen state, and

alienation in our earthly Adam, our captivity, bondage, etc., and also the way of life through the obedience and death of Christ; but our text says, we are "quickened together WITH Christ." Apart from Him we must have been, had the preexisting bond been severed; and apart from Him there was no way possible for us to be quickened. Our natural head, Adam, was made a living soul; but our spiritual representative was made a quickening Spirit. He "quickeneth whom soever He will." "Together WITH Him." How sweet! how heavenly the language! Together with Him, we had life before the world began. Together WITH Him, we are in due time quickened and raised from the dead. Together WITH Christ, are we sons of God, and heirs of immortal glory; and so completely together, or united that when He died for us all, THEN were we all dead; "dead to the law by the body of Christ;" all our accumulated guilt was laid on Him; bearing for us all the dreadful curse of the law, billows of divine wrath overwhelming His soul, and baptizing Him deep in death; but soon the bands of death gave way, soon the auspicious morning dawned, which gave ample demonstration of His complete victory over sin, death and hell, while the radiant flame of His refulgent glory brought life and immortality to light, for all the members of His mystical body. In the resurrection of Christ, the prophecy of Isaiah (26:19) was fulfilled. "Thy dead men shall live; together with My dead body SHALL THEY ARISE. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Having thus IN HIM suffered the vengeance of the law, been crucified together WITH HIM, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance (not to a purchased possession) incorruptible, and undefiled, (notwithstanding our fall in Adam) and that fadeth not away; reserved (not newly procured) in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of

God, through faith unto salvation." (I Peter 1:3-5) Hence we see in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, the all-sufficiency of His atonement, complete satisfaction rendered to law and divine justice, the prison doors are unbarred, the jubilee trumpet is blown, liberty is proclaimed to captives, the prisoners are brought up out of their prison houses; and as He bursts forth from the confines of the tomb, His ransomed church is seen emerging from the dead, while from the old heaven, now dissolving with fervent heat, the shout is heard, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." (Psa. 24:7-9) When God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. (Psa. 47:5) How full of consolation is the contemplation of the union of Christ and the church.

"One in the tomb, one when He rose,
One when He triumph'd o'er His foes,
One when in heav'n He took His seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

Lastly. That this astonishing work was done for us when we were dead in sins, is worthy of special attention. Before we were dead, we needed no such work as quickening, or the resurrection of our blessed Lord for us, as the whole need not a physician. "But God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being NOW justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." (Rom. 5:8-9) And again, This great work being performed for us when we were dead in sins, shows that it could not possibly rest on any merit, work, or will of ours; therefore the apostle adds the words, "By grace are ye saved;" and afterwards declares that it is not of works, lest any man should boast; but that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.

In conclusion, be it ours to reflect with wonder, joy, and gratitude to God, on the revelation of a way of life and salvation so completely adapted to our ruined condition, and so admirably calculated to abase the proud man in the dust before God. “Not unto us, not unto us, O God, but to Thy name give all the glory. Amen.”

Elder Gilbert Beebe

EPHESIANS 2:8.

Please give your views on Ephesians 2:8. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.”

Bell Buckle, Tenn.
June 4, 1867.

Reply: - The doctrine of salvation by grace, without any merit or works, conditions of terms to be performed on the part of the saved to procure or secure it, is so clearly stated and affirmed by the Holy Ghost, through this inspired apostle in this epistle, as well as in all that has ever been written by holy men who have written as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, that it cannot be successfully controverted by all the ingenuity of wicked men and devils. The supreme glory of God in the eternal salvation of his chosen people is most gloriously displayed by the sovereign reign of his grace in its complete accomplishment.

The positive declaration, *For by grace are ye saved,* is too plain and emphatic to require any explanation. The fifth verse affirms the same truth. *By grace ye are saved.* The inquiry arises, not as to how, but who, are saved by grace, and in what sense is it through faith; and the testimony that neither the grace by which, or the faith through which, salvation comes are of those who are saved, but are the gift of God, deserves our special attention.

First. Who are saved by grace? The unequivocal answer to this inquiry is found in the beginning of the epistle, “The saints” which were, at the time this epistle was written, at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus; whether at Ephesus

or elsewhere, and at all times. Those who are in Christ Jesus, we are told in the fourth verse of the first chapter, were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; and in the tenth verse of this second chapter, that they are God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Thus having created and chosen them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and having before ordained that they should walk in good works, and be holy and without blame before him in love, their faithfulness in Christ Jesus is most clearly established. For if God has chosen them in him before the foundation of the world for this express purpose, that they should be holy and without blame; and if God has before ordained that they shall walk in good works; how can it possibly be otherwise than they should be the faithful in Christ Jesus, as stated in the identification of those to whom our text is addressed?

The first inquiry, *Who are saved?* being settled beyond all doubt, by the plain and unmistakable testimony given above, which cannot possibly admit of any other construction than that it embraces all who were chosen of God in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and before ordained that they shall walk in good works, and be holy and without blame before the heart-searching and rein-trying God. And consequently, all who are so chosen and ordained of God are saved by grace, and not by any thing that is in any sense of themselves; we have next to consider:

Second. In what sense we are to understand that this salvation by grace is *through faith.*

1. The apostle Paul, in all his epistles, distinguished the two dispensations of law and gospel, the former as *of works,* and the latter as of faith. Hence we are to understand that salvation by grace comes to us through the gospel, and not through the law. For if a law had been given that could have given life, then verily righteousness should have been by the law. But such could not be the case; for by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God, or be holy and without blame before him in love. "For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect; because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed," etc.

2. Faith is defined by the Spirit of inspiration, as "*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*(Hebrews 11:1)." The eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, is invisible to the sight or understanding of natural man; even those who were embraced in the electing purpose and predestination of God were by nature children of wrath even as others, and as destitute of ability to see, feel, or know, what God had laid up in store for them as any other of mankind; and the knowledge of their salvation comes to them through faith; by revelation of the Spirit to their faith; and their faith is, as we shall presently show, not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Personally and experimentally, no man can have a knowledge of his calling and election of God until he is born of that Spirit whose fruit is faith. "All men have not faith," neither has any man faith until it is given to him; for our text declares that it is the "gift of God." Jesus Christ is the Author and finisher of it, and it is the faith of the Son of God. Therefore it is very apparent to those who have the faith of Jesus Christ, that their salvation by grace is through faith, but:

3. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for.” The hope of the gospel received by or through faith, is thus stated: - “In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began (Titus 1:2).” In the purpose, predestination and promise of God, the salvation by grace of all his chosen people in Christ was secure and perfect from everlasting, and that eternal grace which reigned in our salvation was given to us with all spiritual blessings in Christ, according as God had chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world: “According to the power of God; Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Timothy 1:8-10).” This manifestation is made to and through the faith of the Son of God. When Christ appeared, and abolished death by his own death, or “through death destroyed him that had the power of death,” and rising from the dead brought life and immortality to light, he finished transgression and made an end of sin for all his people. This he came to do, and his name was called Jesus because he should save his people from their sins. He put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification; and we are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

Having thus saved us according to God’s own purpose and grace which was given us in him before the world began, we are, and shall be, called with a holy calling in due time, according to the same purpose and grace. This salvation was finished and complete according to God’s own purpose and grace when Jesus rose from the dead and brought our life and immortality to light in his resurrection life. The faith of the Son of God, when his soul was made an offering for sin,

did see his seed, and prolonged his days, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in his hands (Isaiah 53.10). Through the same faith of the Son of God in his members, the saving virtue of his blood and righteousness was anticipated, applied, and savingly received by Abel, Abraham, and all the Old Testament saints; and through the same faith of the Son of God all the redeemed of the Lord, under the present dispensation have, do, or shall receive a knowledge of this salvation, and they shall all know and confess that it is wholly of grace, through faith, and in no sense, in any wise or measure of themselves. "It is the gift of God;" which it could not be if obtained as a reward of merit, or in consideration of any thing done by us. For the apostle testifies that if it be by works, then it is no more by grace; and if by grace, then it is no more by works. It cannot possibly be of both, or partly of grace and partly of works. We are not left to guess on which of these two opposites our salvation rests; for we are so plainly told that it is of the one, and that it is not of the other. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

Infidel Arminians (we say infidel, because none who believe what God has said can be Arminians) in their desperate effort to pervert this Scripture, say that the grace by which we are saved is of God, but the faith through which we receive it is of ourselves; and that by faith as a condition, we may obtain the grace, and so secure the salvation; and this heaven daring logic finds a ready market in our guilty world. But suppose their logic good, would it not follow that if we procured the grace by our faith, that the whole, grace, faith and salvation would all be of ourselves, and not the gift of God? If, as they affirm, God has offered this salvation on certain terms to everybody, and some comply with the terms and are saved, and others reject the terms and perish, then the declaration of our text would be falsified, and men who

complied with the terms would have right to boast over those who rejected them. And would it not further prove that neither the grace nor the faith, nor even the blood of Christ, saved anybody? If the salvation of sinners depends on what they do to obtain it, then the apostle is found a false witness of God to us. But the Scriptures abundantly testify that the grace by which the saints are saved is the grace of God; therefore it is not of ourselves; and the faith through which we are saved is the faith of the Son of God, and the fruit of the Spirit, it therefore cannot be of ourselves. It is the gift of God. This grace by which we are saved, as we have proved by II Timothy 1:9, was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. And this faith through which we are saved is the faith of Jesus Christ, and fruit of his Spirit by which we are quickened and born again; and that it is through the faith of Jesus Christ that we receive the salvation which is by grace, "Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls (I Peter 1:9)."

In conclusion, let us review the array of the apostle's testimony in its connection. God the Father hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. This Christ in whom God has given all spiritual blessings, God has raised up from the dead, and hath set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. And you, the body of Christ, hath he quickened; for he is the life of his whole body - and he filleth all, in all the members of that body. So in his resurrection, he has brought life and immortality to light, and vitalized, or redeemed from death, the ministration of the law; and quickened, and raised them

up together, and made them sit together in the heavenly places in him. That in the ages to come, he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. Thus the faith of Jesus Christ, through which salvation comes, looking down the dim vista of ages to come, holds in view all the millions of his redeemed, whom he has redeemed from death, and of whom he is the resurrection, and the life, although they are in themselves dead in sins. In the ages to come he will shew, exhibit, bring to light, all the members of that body over which God has given him to preside, and call them all by his grace, deliver them experimentally from sin, and bring them into the glorious light of the gospel; and cause them all to come in the unity of the faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. The faith through which salvation by grace is received, holds the certain ultimate gathering of all things which are in heaven, or in earth, and down to the end of time, even in him.

We confidently believe no quickened child of God can hate or resist this doctrine of salvation by grace. Some may fail to understand it; but so far as it is opened to their understanding they are obliged to love it, and to rejoice in it. But the trouble is with many, if not all, to know that they are embraced in this great salvation. That assurance and consolation they can only receive through faith. When their faith prevails above their fears, then they set to their seal that God is true; and then they can and do rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. As the carnal Israelites could not enter into rest, because of unbelief, so when darkness and doubts, and unbelief from our fleshly nature prevails over our mind, we labor and toil through wearisome nights through which we pass; but when the eyes of our understanding are enlightened that we may know what is the

hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in his saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead; then, believing we rejoice, and enter into rest.

Middletown, N.Y.
October 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 86 – 92

EPHESIANS II. 10.

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

The epistle in which our text is found is addressed “to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus,” and embraces all those of every name and locality, of every kindred, and throughout all time, which were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ, unto God, and made acceptable in the Beloved. With these the apostle includes and identifies himself in the pronoun we. “For we are his workmanship.” As well in the apostle’s day, as at the present time, men were found contending for salvation by works; and those who expected to be justified by the deeds of the law, and accepted according to their own righteousness. In branding this heresy, and to settle this matter forever, the holy apostle, inspired by the Holy Ghost, has said in the preceding connection of our subject, most emphatically, “For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.” And then follow the words of our text, “For we are his workmanship,” &c. Being the workmanship of God, we cannot be our own workmanship, nor the workmanship of men or of angels. This workmanship embraces and includes all the work, from first to last, that has any bearing on our salvation, or the good works which he has before ordained that his people shall walk in. The creation, formation, manifestation, as well as the inscription of the names of all the saints in the Lamb’s book of life before the world began, must necessarily have been the work of God himself. Therefore he says, “Bring my sons from far,

and my daughters from the ends of the earth: even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory." "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. Thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; and thou art mine." The workmanship of God plainly appears in their creation and formation, and also in their redemption, "For I have redeemed thee." Their Redeemer is the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth. The whole arrangement of the covenant of grace and salvation was the work of God alone. He loved them with an everlasting love. He elected them, as he has declared, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." It was his work alone to "Bless them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "He hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works; but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." In all this the exclusive workmanship of God is indisputable. Nor is this all, their regeneration and heavenly birth are also the work of God. Of his own will begat he them; and they are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Hence the men of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost, most devoutly acknowledged that God has wrought all our works in us, that it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. No man can come unto God but by Christ, and no man can come unto Christ except the Father draws him. No man knoweth the Son, but he unto whom the Father shall reveal him. Simon Bar-jona was blessed in this, that flesh and blood had not revealed to him the Son of God, but the Father which is in heaven. And

Paul also testifies the same. When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, to reveal his Son in me, straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood. Again, God, who commanded the light to shine out of the darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ. Each of these Scriptures, separately considered, prove beyond all successful controversy that the saints are exclusively the workmanship of God, and all of them collectively confirm the same important truth. Of this truth every one that is born of God and taught by his Spirit, has a witness in his own experience, and as soon as he is born of the Spirit, he begins to lisp it forth in language, like this: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul; he hath taken me up out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and he hath established my goings, and put a new song into my mouth," &c. The workmanship of God is inimitable. Neither men nor angels can create within us a clean heart, nor renew within us a right spirit. When men attempt to convert sinners, make ministers, direct the course of the gospel, or to protect the church, they make wretched work; their base imitations may be received by the world, but they are easily detected by those who are taught of God. "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord, God, Almighty." Truly he is a wonder-working God. "All his works are perfect." But none of the works of men are perfect. And this is the work of God, saith Jesus, that ye believe on me, for faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and it is the gift of God.

"Created in Christ Jesus." As our natural creation was in Adam, so our spiritual creation is in Christ. What we understand by our creation in Adam is, that God gave us an existence in the person of Adam, which was to be developed in the proper time, by ordinary or natural generation; and so it is our understanding of the Scriptures on this subject, that God gave his people their original spiritual life in Jesus Christ,

who is the second Adam and the Lord from heaven, and that all spiritual blessings were given to the church in him, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And as the apostle John has said, And this is the record, (or divine testimony) that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. The Son of God is the life of his people, as it is written, When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory. The life given to the church is called eternal life, and that which is eternal is without beginning of time or end of duration; yet it is spoken of as a creation in our text. What then are we to understand by the term, in its application to the spiritual existence of the church of God in Christ Jesus the Lord? To help our infirmities, we being finite creatures, God has in his word pointed us to natural things, as figures of things which are spiritual. Thus the natural creation of the world is illustrative of the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. But while we trace the instruction given in the figure, we should be careful to observe that the figure is natural, but the things signified are spiritual. As, for instance, in the new birth, allusion is made to a natural birth, but not to signify that the new birth is a natural birth, but as in the natural, a new production or manifestation of natural life is developed, so in the second birth, a new and spiritual life is brought forth and made manifest. All we know of the natural creation of the world is, that God spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was done. All things were spoken into existence, which did not previously exist, and this calling things into existence was called creation; formation is another thing. But in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and all that in them is, and all the years that fill up the space from the creation to the great burning day, are required for the development of what was in the beginning created. The spiritual existence of the church is also attributed to the word

of God, which liveth and abideth forever. And it is thus set forth, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him.” That is, by the word, which was with God, and which was God. “And without him was not anything made that was made.” “In him” (that is, in the Word which was with God, and which was God) “was life, and the life was the light of men.” “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” John bore witness of him, and cried, saying, “This was he of whom I spake. He that cometh after me is preferred before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace.” Thus as the existence of the natural world was embraced in the word of God’s power, and sprung forth into development, when that word of power was spoken, so the spiritual existence of the church, or the life of the church of God, was in the Word, which was with God, and the Word which was God. This Word in which was life, and grace, and truth, is the same that was made flesh and dwelt among us, and whose glory was seen by the saints as that of the only begotten of the Father. The relative appellation of Son, applying to Christ in his mediatorial position, is based on his being the only begotten of the Father, and begotten full of grace and truth. His being the begotten Son of the Father, shows that his existence was in the Father, and one with him, and that his being set up as the mediatorial Head and life of his people, in eternity, is what we understand to be expressed by the terms begotten, set up, brought forth, sent, &c., together with every other term implying derivation or subordination, which is in the Scriptures applied to him, except such as apply to the flesh which he assumed, or was made, when made of a woman, and when he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of. Thus, as in the creation of the natural world, God spake all things into existence by the word of his power; so, in the

spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, he spake the word and it stood fast. He spake, and said of Christ, “A seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.” Our hope of eternal life, therefore, rests upon the promise which God, who cannot lie, made before the world began. And hence it is affirmed that God hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

The third and last point to be considered is, Unto what end were we created in Christ Jesus? Our text informs us that they were created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Many portions of the Scriptures express substantially the same thing. Peter says, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.” And Paul says, “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.” The psalmist whose words we have quoted, says, “A seed shall serve him,” &c. “They shall come and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.” The good works in which God has ordained that his people shall walk are also ordained of God. God has said, they shall shew forth his praise. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness, and to this end were they created in Christ Jesus, and to secure this end he has not only taken them up out of the horrible pit, but he has established, or before ordained, their goings, and put a new song in their mouths. It is not in them that walk to direct their own steps, for God has before ordained that he will lead them in a way that they knew not, and in paths that they have not known, and put his fear in

their hearts, that they shall not depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. This people he has formed for himself, and they shall shew forth his praise, for he has before ordained it. No works are good in his sight, but such as he has before ordained for them to walk in, and of these the New Testament is replete with instruction, and the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works. All works which he has not ordained are evil. In no other works than those which he has ordained can we glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are his.

In our fleshly nature we are fallen and depraved, and the whole fountain of our carnal hearts and minds are polluted and wicked, and "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?" Not one. From our creation in Adam we have a nature which is totally depraved, in which there dwelleth no good thing. In that nature, "There is none that seeketh after God; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But in our spiritual creation in Christ, we are constituted members of him. His Spirit is put within us; his law is written within our inward parts, and we are redeemed from the law, and become dead to it by the body of Christ, that we should be married unto another, even to him that is risen from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. By vital union with Christ we have our fruits unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. But as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, neither can we bring forth fruit to the honor and glory of God, except we abide in Christ; for he is the true vine, and we are the branches.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1856

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 319 - 326

EPHESIANS 4.8

Penn Yan, N.Y.
Dec. 29, 1864.

Will Elder Beebe please give his views on Ephesians. 4:8: "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." Who were the captives? Your reply will oblige an enquirer after truth.

Hanna Miller.

Reply: - The apostle evidently referred to the prophetic declaration to Psalms 68:18, in which the faith of the inspired psalmist anticipated the glorious triumph of our Lord Jesus Christ over sin, death and hell, in the perfect and complete redemption of his people. The spirit of Christ, which was in the holy prophets, not only signified the sufferings which he should endure, but also the glory that should follow. They not only predicted that he should be put to death in the flesh, but also that he should be quickened in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. Bearing the weight of all the iniquities of his people, which it pleased the Father to lay upon him, he sank down into the embrace of death and the grave; being delivered up for the transgression of his people, but he was raised again from the dead for their justification; and having finished transgression and made an end of sin, it was not possible that he should be longer holden by the pains of death, for he had power as well to take up his life, as he had to lay it down, for this command, or authority, he received of the Father. The mighty work of redemption which devolved on him, as the mediatorial Head of his church, is frequently set forth as a conflict and victory. As a mighty warrior he comes forth from his chambers, rejoicing like a strong man to run a race. His way was obstructed by the sins of all his

members, which like towering mountains reached up to heaven; calling aloud for retributive vengeance. The holy law of God gave irresistible potency to sin, and demanded that "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And the eternal, immutable and inflexible justice of God forbids that the sinner should escape his dreadful doom until every jot and tile of the law should be fulfilled. In entering the field of conflict laden with all the crushing weight of the sins of all his people, he is seen traveling in the greatness of his strength, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save. The day of vengeance was in his heart, for the year of his redeemed had come, and therefore was he red in his apparel, and all his garments stained like him that treadeth in the wine fat.

The sublime majesty of our conquering Hero, in the opening of the campaign, is strikingly portrayed in the prayer of Habakkuk 3: "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran, Selah. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. And his brightness was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand; and there was the hiding of his power. Before him went the pestilence, and burning coals went forth at his feet. He stood and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting." His "Bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled; the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation: as the light of thine arrows they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear. Thou didst march through the land in indignation, thou didst thrash the heathen in anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation, with thine anointed; thou woundest the head out of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation

unto the neck, Selah." "Thou didst walk through the sea with thy horses, through the heap of great waters. When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself." The power of earth and hell were marshaled for the conflict. Hell is enlarged, she stirreth up her dead, and every opposing power is put in battle array. But still the unfaltering conqueror rides forth in majesty, with his sword upon his thigh, and his arrows go forth as lightning, and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The terrible conflict rages. The sword of Jehovah gleams in the heavens, it awakes against the man who is the fellow of the God of Hosts. Deep waters gather, they come into his soul, and all their billows pass over him. The dreadful hour draws nigh. "Father, save me from this hour!" Yet for this hour came he forth into the world. The cup is presented to his lips. But Oh, his soul recoils, his agonizing sweat like drops of blood fall upon the ground. He prays, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass!" Could that have been, then the great work of salvation must have failed. But hear his words of submission, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief." Death in his most terrible form enters the field; the bloody cross is reared. The fearful cloud darkens in wrath, the pains of hell take hold on him! Death strikes! The heavens darken! The sun is pale and dim, ceases to shine. The presence of the Father is withdrawn, and the gloomy darkness of death involves the quaking earth. The expiring victim writhes in the dreadful struggle. How goes the battle now? Death seems to triumph. Christ as a captive is laid in the chains of captivity, is laid a prisoner in the grave! The pillars of the heavens tremble, the rocks are rent, the graves are opened, and the startled dead awake. But is all lost? We verily thought this victim was he that should have redeemed Israel; but now alas! the deep waters of death have gone over his soul. He is baptized, (not sprinkled) in death. But,

"Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy, when I fall I shall arise." O Death, I will be thy plagues! O Grave, I will be thy destruction! Repentance shall be hid from mine eyes. The triumph of death is short, the victory of the grave is but for a moment: for your victim shall swallow up death in everlasting victory. The resurrection morning dawns; and now O Death, where is thy sting, and Grave, where is thy victory? Death who had never been despoiled of a victim before, the grave which in all preceding ages guarded well its charge, is now spoiled. Death yields up her mighty dead. The grave, though guarded and secure as men could make it, is spoiled; for it was in this, the Idumean road, the mighty Savior was to travel in the greatness of his strength. It was thus through death he was to destroy death and him that had the power of death. It was thus it behooved him to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Now having abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel; as our God, he has gone up with a shout, and with a sound of a trumpet. "Whom the heavens must receive until the restitution of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began." He hath ascended up on high. For, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31) "According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." (Ephesians. 1:19-23) Thus when he ascended up on high, as the divinely recognized head over all things to his church, all spiritual gifts were included in him as

God's unspeakable gift to the church. "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that scended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." And of the gifts which were given, and which he has as the head of the church received, the apostle says, "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." And he also informs us what he gave them for, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." (Ephesians. 4:10-13)

We have briefly referred to the conflict in which our Lord was engaged, and to his ultimate triumph over his captors; but as sister Miller particularly enquires, Who were the captives? We will offer a few thoughts in reply to that particular enquiry.

As the idea of captivity necessarily implies captives taken and held as trophies, we are here to understand a previous and subsequent captivation.

Of the previous captivity mentioned in our text, we understand that in which sin, death and hell had captivated and held in chains of darkness all the chosen people of God, for whose deliverance God sent forth his only begotten Son. In their legal standing we are told that they were carnal, sold under sin. God's chosen people, whom Christ came to redeem, were called captives, and were in a state of captivity, and lawful captives too. For having been captivated by sin, death reigned over them, and they were all their lifetime subject to bondage. But Christ was anointed "to proclaim liberty to captives, and to open the prison door to them that were bound." (Isaiah. 61:1,2) But "Shall the prey

be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive be delivered? But, thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered." (Isaiah. 49:24,25) The legality of our bondage was settled by the strength of the law, which said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," thus consigning us as sinners to the dominion of death, and death reigned over us, and in bondage also to sin, sin having dominion over us, and sin reigning over us unto death. Such was our captivity to sin and death confirmed also by the law of God, that we could not possibly be delivered from our captivity until the utmost demands of the law were canceled, and our captors taken captive and led into captivity.

By the subsequent captivity, we allude to the personal captivity of our Redeemer. He was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, and, as we have shown, he as bearing our sins, was numbered with the transgressors: led as a lamb to the slaughter, consigned to the dominions of death, and imprisoned in the grave until his triumphant resurrection in which we are in our text and context told that "He led captivity captive." That is, he captured the very powers that had captivated his people, and had held him as their Surety in captivity, until the time of his resurrection. "Having spoiled principalities and powers," (the principalities of sin and death, both of which had held regal dominion,) "he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. 2:15) The mighty principalities and powers which had reigned unrivaled from the entrance of sin into our world were conquered and led into captivity by the great Captain of our salvation, who said to John, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I live forever, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." Completely subjugated and put under him, neither hell nor death can possibly extend their power beyond the limits he has fixed for them. He has destroyed death, and him that had the power of

death, that is the devil, and delivered them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

The former captivity of his people is now a captive to our conquering King. Sin is vanquished; hell is subdued; Satan is held in a mighty chain, and his works are destroyed.

"Deep in the shades of gloomy death
The mighty prisoner captive lay;
The almighty captive left the tomb,
And rose to everlasting day.

See how the Conqueror mounts aloft,
And to his Father flies;
With scars of honor in his flesh,
And triumph in his eyes."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
March 1, 1865

Republished – The Remnant
September-October 1995
Volume 9, No. 5

EPHESIANS 4:13

Brother Beebe: I see in the *Signs,* of July 1st, 1860, that you take some exception to the use of the term *soul,*when applied to Christ in his preexistent state. I used it as a distinctive term, not that I had any preference to that term; and it would have been better, perhaps, to have used one that was clearly Scriptural. Brother Beebe, in speaking of the character and nature of Christ, you say, "To which the Church shall be conformed *when* we all come *unto* the unity," etc. Now, by noticing that connection, you will perceive that the Apostle was speaking of the gifts which the Lord gave to the Church, which was for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: *Till* (not when) we all come *in* (not unto) the unity, etc. It appears, brother Beebe, from some of your remarks, that you had some fears that I held a doctrine that man had no soul until he was regenerated. I have examined my letter, and I do not think that it contains that idea; at any rate, I have no such idea. The term *soul* is evidently used in different senses: sometimes as a peculiar property in the body, and is the man, whether in the body or out of the body, as in Rev. vi. 9; also 1 Cor. xii. 2, and many other similar passages. It is also used as the whole natural man; for we are told that the Lord God formed man (not a part of him) of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man (the same man that was formed) became a living soul. It does not say that man *received* a soul by the breath of life being breathed into his nostrils, but, man became a living soul. Again, in Ezek. xviii., where the Lord is speaking of his dealings with national Israel, under the Jewish law, or old covenant, in verse 4: "Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: The soul that sinneth, it shall die." If we read on to the 20th verse, there we will find him saying, "The soul that

sinneth, it shall die: The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." I am aware that those who preach conditional salvation generally run to the old covenant to try to prove conditional salvation and falling from grace. But if they would only read the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, where the blessings pronounced in the law to Israel, and the curses therein denounced against them, are condensed, they would find that all the blessings and cursings therein are temporal, and pertain only to time. Some persons appear to be so afraid of Universalism that they want to make every place where Hell, cursing, damnation, destruction, etc., are mentioned, to apply to all eternity: while the truth is, there are many, very many, places where they are spoken in reference to time. If, because Hell is used figuratively in regard to time, it proves there is no future punishment, then Heaven being used figuratively would prove that there is no future happiness. One is just as certain from the Scriptures as the other future misery is just as certain to the Devil and his angels, as future happiness is to the blessed of the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But where Hell, etc., are spoken in reference to time, let us use them where they belong, and thereby we will keep the Universalist from getting the advantage of us.

Brother Beebe, I have extended this letter to the length you see, although my object was to let you know that you need not be afraid of offending me by the privilege you took with my letter. There are none of us so wise, but that what we know is only in part; and in this way we can be a help to each other.

Yours in that sweetest of all bonds, Christian
JOSEPH ARMSTRONG

Brother J. Armstrong's Reply to our remarks on his letter, which appeared in our number for July 1st, are satisfactory to us. When we referred to Eph. iv. 13, our object was to merely call attention to what is there presented in regard to the *stature of Christ,* as applicable to him in his mediatorial relation as the Head of the body, the Church. In chapter i. 19-21, the mighty power of God, which he wrought in Christ in his resurrection, exaltation, etc., is brought savingly to bear upon his entire Church; for that God hath given him, Christ, to be the head over all things to his Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. This body, we are told, in chapter iv. 4, is one body, animated by one spirit, even as the saints and faithful in Christ Jesus are all called in one hope of their calling. This Head and body is the perfect man of which we understand the Apostle to speak in the 13th verse; and the measure of the stature of this perfect man requires the whole church, for the church is the fulness of him. Those who have been called by grace to a saving knowledge of Christ, have already come in the unity of the faith, and others are yet in an experimental sense to come in the unity of the faith, and till we all so come, the gifts which are for the perfecting of the saints and for the edifying of this body shall be effectual for the purpose for which Christ, the Head, received and gave them, namely, for the edifying of this body. - The measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, or the measure of the church, which is that fulness, was as perfect when the body with its Head were set up in the counsel and purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, as it will be after all the members of that body shall have been brought into this unity. The unity of the faith is the unity of the spirit. And there is one spirit, and there is one faith, even as there is one Lord, one baptism, one hope of our calling, and one God and Father of all. We do not perceive there is any difference in our views on this subject.

We did not intend to express a suspicion that our much loved brother held that men were destitute of souls previously to being born again, for we had no such suspicion; but our allusion was to the Headship of Christ, not as a progenitor of souls, but of spiritual life - as, Adam was made a living soul, and as such was the progenitive head of all mankind, of their souls as well as of their bodies. But Christ, as the second, or anti-typical Adam, was made a quickening spirit. Or, in other words, all spiritual, holy, heavenly and eternal life was given to the body, the Church, in Christ as the Head of the Church, and all who are brought in the unity of the faith, receive it in the one spirit which is born of God, as coming from the Eternal Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

With the various senses in which the words soul, souls, hell, etc., are used in the scriptures, we perfectly agree in the remarks made by brother Armstrong. These remarks are only designed to show that we are not aware of any difference between us upon these subjects.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 421 - 424

EPHESIANS 6:1-5.

If it is not asking too much, I will request you to give your views through the “Signs” on Ephesians 6:1-5. Who are the children and the parents there spoken of? As I have heard different views on the subject, I should be glad to have yours, and there are others in this vicinity who also desire your views on the subject.

M. E. King

Reply: - The apostle had nothing to do with laying down rules for the government of any outside of the church of Christ. As apostles of Christ they were officially seated on twelve thrones, with authority from above to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. Not the carnal Israelites, for they are not all Israel that are of Israel, but in Isaac shall thy seed be called. Neither the children of the flesh, for they are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are the children recognized under the gospel for the true spiritual anti-typical Israel, over whom the apostles on thrones of judgment were to preside. Christ had said of and to them, “When the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory” (that is, when he should have finished transgressions and made an end of sin, risen from the dead, and shall have set upon its kingdom in its gospel organization, and ascended his throne., in his spiritual kingdom), then they should also sit on the twelve thrones: according to the prophecy, “Behold a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.” The installation of the apostles in power to judge the subjects of the kingdom, over which Christ reigns as the blessed and only potentate, invested them with no more power or authority over any that were or are not in the kingdom of Christ, than the inauguration of a president over the States of America, gives to such a president to preside

over the affairs of England, France, or Russia. His kingdom is not of this world, consequently the officers, princes, or judges in it have no power or dominion beyond her legitimate boundaries.

The subjects of Christ's kingdom over which the apostles hold authority are those, and only those, who are born of water and of the Spirit; for Jesus has said expressly that none other can enter his kingdom. Of those who are born of God, taught by the Spirit, and gathered into the kingdom, and brought under the judgment of the apostles, there are of all the classes, kindreds and tribes of mankind, redeemed unto God, and duly admitted as fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. Of these, there are some parents, and some children; some husbands and some wives, some masters, and some servants, called by grace, born of the Spirit and received into the church. But while their new spiritual birth brings them into a new relation to the church, it does not annul their fleshly relations in which they before existed. A parent in nature, in being born again and baptized into an apostolic church, does not thereby cease to be a parent, nor is he thereby released from any responsibility to faithfully fulfill every obligation which was before binding on him to his children in the flesh. Nor does the conversion and admission of a child, son or daughter, into the church release him or her from their obligation to honor or obey their parents; and if both children and parents are members of the church of God, although as church members they are on a perfect equality, yet as parents and children are fleshly relations, they are still held under all the obligations in that relationship which existed before. And this rule is also applied to the relationship of husbands and wives, whether married or betrothed; to masters and servants, magistrates or citizens, their new relationship to each other in the church by no means abrogates their old relationship. In the primitive churches there were frequently instances of whole families

and households being born again and brought together into the same church, and it was necessary for the apostles on their thrones of judgment to settle what were their relative obligations to each other.

In the case before us (Ephesians 6:1-5), the apostle limits the application of his administration to those children and parents which were *in the Lord;* that is, in the church, which is the body of our Lord; as he had no right to extend his judgment beyond the body of Christ. Children which were in the Lord, and parents also in the Lord, were alike subject, in all things, to the laws of the Lord, as expounded and applied by the apostles. As in the preceding chapter, Paul had given authoritative instructions as to the relative duties of husbands and wives, which were under his direction, being in the church, and to the Corinthians to those who were espoused, or betrothed; so, in this chapter he admonishes the children of the Lord, or church, to obey their parents, which were also in the Lord, or church, and the parents are also admonished in regard to their duty to their children in the Lord, and the servants in the church, to their masters which were in the church, and the masters to their servants which were in the church.

In evidence that Paul's admonitions in this chapter were restricted to such children, parents, servants and masters as were members of the church, in the fourth verse he admonished the fathers in the Lord to bring up their children in the Lord in the *nurture and admonition* of the Lord. *Nurture* is food, and the nurture of the Lord is spiritual food or nourishment, and this is connected with the admonition of the Lord, or church. Now neither spiritual food or gospel admonitions can be applicable to any who are not in the Lord. But how suitable the instructions to the godly fathers and mothers, who with their sons and daughters, were gathered into the church, that the fathers should feel a

special charge devolving on them to give wholesome spiritual instruction to their Christian children. But should we attempt to feed our carnal unconverted children on gospel food, they would trample our pearls under their feet and turn and rend us.

Middletown, N.Y
November 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 287 – 290

EPHESIANS VI. 12.

Dear Brother: If it be not asking too much, I would like to have you publish your views on Eph. vi. 12, last clause, "Against spiritual wickedness in high places."

D.M. VARNER
Somerton, Ohio, March 18, 1861.

Reply: In our polyglot Bible, we have the marginal rendering of this clause, *wicked spirits,* instead of *spiritual wickedness.*The apostle has very clearly presented the church of God as the body of Christ, in this epistle, and traced the vitality of the whole body to Christ, as the Head of the body, and the church as the fullness of his body, who filleth all in all. And, having given the more cheering assurances of this vital and indissoluble union, its eternity and vitality, in closing the epistle he is inspired by the Holy Ghost to urge upon the saints such wholesome admonitions as they require; such as loving one another, as Christ has loved the church. The relative duties of husbands and wives, children and parents, servants and masters; for although in the body of Christ, which is spiritual, they are all one, yet in the flesh their relations to each other are unchanged, and their relative duties are as imperative, by the law of Christ, as they were before, so that the husband, the wife, the parent, the child, the servant and the master cannot disregard these relations and duties, without disloyalty to Christ, who is their Head. In urging these with all other obligations which devolve on the saints, and knowing the many temptations and oppositions rising from the flesh and from Satan to a faithful performance of all that he enjoins, he exhorts them to put on the whole armor of God, and describes the armor of God, from head to foot, as in all respects differing from and opposite to that kind of armor

which is used in contending merely with flesh and blood, or with our fellow-men, for instead of a carnal warfare requiring carnal weapons, such as Sharp’s rifles, or any other kind of rifles or earthly weapons, we require the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand, for our conflict is against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. By principalities we may understand all the organized forces of the kingdom of Satan, which indeed are many. As in the type, Babylon had an hundred and twenty and seven provinces, and the number of the antichristian beast is the number of a man, six hundred, three score and six, so we may infer that the organized powers of spiritual wickedness has its plurality, its rank and file, its officers and subalterns, against them all the saints are called to wrestle; and against powers, such as the powers of darkness, and the powers of our own corrupt nature, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world. The darkness of this world is what this world calls light, for the rulers of it put darkness for light, and light for darkness. Among the rulers of the darkness of this world we may class the clergy and the professors, who teach what they regard as the science of divinity, and oppose their science to the light of divine revelation. By their schools of divinity, including their infant schools, Bible classes, Sunday and Theological schools, together with such machinery in connection as Missionary and Tract Societies, their pulpit and printing influences, they certainly control to a very great extent the darkness and delusions of this world, corrupting the infant mind with false notions in regard to spiritual things, nurturing in them a prejudice against the truth, which must, if not arrested by divine interposition, ripen into violent hostility, and, perhaps, open persecution. And in their higher schools heaping teachers, having itching ears, which in the present running capacity of their machinery, they can supply to order. If anti-christ requires Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregationalist,

Methodist or New School Baptist preachers, those institutions can turn them out in any quantity or quality required, provided only that a paying amount of cash accompany the orders. And if to thicken the darkness and involve the country in anarchy, abolition preachers be required for the north, or fire-eaters for the south, the gearing of the engine is easily shifted to accommodate that object, so that their graduates may be prepared to cry, Lo here, or lo there, as will most effectually intensify the darkness, delusion and fanatacism required to turn away the ears of men from the truth, and incline them to fables.

Spiritual wickedness, or the abominable corruptions of high places by wicked spirits, appears to us to signify wickedness which assumes a religious or spiritual garb, having a tendency to corrupt in high places, embracing all the antichristian abominations of the man of sin, the son of perdition, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, with all signs and lying wonders. This wicked had already begun to work in the apostolic age, but was restrained until the time when the *let* or hindrance should be removed, and that wicked revealed. Some of the characteristics of this wicked are given by inspired writers, thus, “Who opposeth and exalteth itself above all that is called God, so that he as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” - 2 Thess. ii. 4. These characters are too clearly drawn by the pencil of inspired wisdom to admit of any doubt that the spiritual wickedness against which the saints are called to wrestle, contend and struggle, is the same which we are now resisting; it has become more fully developed since the date of Paul’s letters to the Thessalonians; evil men and seducers have waxed worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. None doubt that the inauguration of the pope to his pontifical throne, and his usurpation of the spiritual affairs of the church, and his claim of divine power also to rule over the

temporal affair of the kingdoms of this world, was, so far, a fulfillment of what Paul had predicted, and it would have been happy for the world if the whole development had been confined to the papal beast. But alas, the image of the beast presents the same outlines. As the pope assumed the control of the spiritual affairs of the church of God, so he took his seat in the temple of God; and as in claiming, as vicar of God, an absolute right to subject the temporal governments of the world to his mandates, he exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, for Christ as the King of Zion had made no such claim, in his spiritual connection with his church, but had distinctly declared that his kingdom is not of this world. And as all that the christian worships as God is embodied in Christ, so the pope exalted himself above all that is called God, by assuming such power as Christ disclaimed. It is true that Christ is exalted in his providential power as the God of the whole earth, and has power over all flesh, the King of kings and Lord of lords, but it is equally true that he clearly draws the line between his kingdom and this world; between his spiritual and his providential governments. When he was called on to divide an inheritance for certain heirs at law, he said to them, “Who hath made me judge?” &c., declining to decide their temporal matters. The high places of the papal spiritual wickedness were the assumed headship of the church, and a place so high in temporal power, as to rule over the kings and potentates of this world.

But we have intimated that this spiritual wickedness in high places is not confined to the papal beast. The setting up of the image of this papal beast by the protestant, or two-horned beast, which rose up out of the earth, and the investment of their image with all the power of its prototype by them. See Rev. xiii. - “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the

first beast before him." Is it not obviously true, that the Reformed church, which came out of the papal establishment, exercised the same power, that is the civil and ecclesiastical and temporal power that some of the potentates of the earth were enlisted and elevated as being by the grace of God, Defenders of the faith, &c., and that they did exercise that power by pains and penalties, and enforce their faith by armed forces in the field? But this is not all: the same power of *all signs and lying wonders, and all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.* For John testifieth in verses 12-14, "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceiveth them that dwell upon the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live."

The same self-exalted spirit which was betrayed by the two-horned beast, has made its marks so as to give evidence of its existence in all the so-called puritanic and other protestant establishments so far as they have had opportunity. Their violent persecutions have been restrained in our country, since the organization of our national confederacy, by our constitution, which very wisely provided that no religious denomination should be preferred by the government. This restraint, however, has never set easy on the Puritans or Protestants, the former of which had previously, from their landing from the May Flower, at Plymouth, enjoyed the luxury of whipping, banishing, burning, torturing and driving out of the country the Baptists, the Quakers, the witches, and, in short, all who could not, or would not, embrace their creed; while the latter had power to

deprive the saints to some extent of their religious privileges, by arresting and imprisoning their ministers.

But even under the best form of constitutional government the world has ever known, which has guaranteed to every citizen of our great republic liberty to worship his God according to the dictates of his own conscience, this spiritual wickedness, though restricted and restrained, has continued to exist, and to make some astonishing developments, by aspiring to the high position of the temple of God, to a seat, a power and dignity; assuming the seat of God, by professing to have authority from heaven to do what none but God can do: the conversion of sinners, the evangelizing the heathen, the salvation of mankind, the calling, qualifying and employing of ministers, the organization of churches on creeds, rites and policies of human invention, ignoring the New Testament, and with it the supreme authority of Christ. And down to the present day they claim and receive from men the honors and reverence, the confidence and prerogatives which belong alone to God, and they exalt themselves above all that is called God, by claiming for their human contrivances a far greater efficiency in the salvation of men than they allow to God’s method of salvation. This is spiritual wickedness in high places. But it is not in the nature of this wicked spirit to be satisfied with its extravagant and blasphemous assumption of ecclesiastical influence, its insatiable desire for temporal power demands the reins of our civil government, and the right to control the domestic institutions of the states and territories of our country, and to direct the action of Congress, threatening the states and the nation with the thunderbolts of heaven, if they do not respect their aspirations. The demoralizing and corrupting influences are manifest in the growing degeneracy of the citizens of our country, in the prevalence of crime of every revolting name, and upon the high places of our government in the alienation of fraternal fellowship and genial co-operation, in the

disruption of the bonds of our federal union, and in fanning the flame of discord, prejudice and hatred, and in urging our country into the horrors of a civil war.

To wrestle against all this, the saints are not to use carnal weapons, such as the enemy relies upon. We require the armor of God, and no other armor will do for the disciples of the Lamb of God. But may we have on the whole armor of God, and having done all to stand, having our loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all taking of the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer, &c.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 481 - 487

ETERNAL GENERATION

Sir: - Will you do a reader of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES the favor to give your opinion of the doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son of God?

Reply: - The above note came to us by mail, precisely as we have copied it above, without place or date, but post-marked on the envelope by the stamp, Baltimore, Md., Feb. 11, and directed to us at New Vernon, in this County; thence it was forwarded to us at this place. Who the querist is, and what is desired, and for what purpose, we do not fully comprehend, but as we desire always to oblige, as far as we have ability, the readers of the SIGNS, we will inform the inquirer frankly, that we do not know what the doctrine is, on which our opinion is requested. We have found no mention made, in our version of the Scriptures, of *the eternal generation of the Son of God,* in so many words, therefore we suppose the inquiry relates to some theory or doctrine so designated, as held and taught by men. As we do not know what the theory or doctrine is, we have no other opinion than this, that the Scriptures contain all that it is essential for the saints to understand in regard to the doctrine of God our Savior. That he is the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and that he was the Son of God before he was sent into the world, and is the same yesterday, today and forever, and that he who is the Son of God, is also the eternal, underived, independent God, we also firmly believe. That in his Mediatorial union with his body, his church, he is the only begotten of the Father, while in his supreme Godhead, he is the fullness of the Godhead, underived and unbegotten.

The New Testament begins with the words, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David." - Matt. i. 1. Of

his generation in this sense, we are told that he was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. i. 3, 4.) Of his generation as the seed of David, we find no record of its being called *eternal.* The inspired psalmist, in prophesying of him, says: "The kingdom is the Lord's, and he is the governor among the nations," &c. "A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." - Psalms xxii. 28,30. This prophetic declaration of the royal prophet, compared with 1 Peter ii. 9: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," &c., very clearly presents to us, the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God. The life, that is, the eternal life or immortality of this generation, was with the Father, (1 John i. 2:) "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." - 1 John v. 11, 12. This generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as we have proven by 1 Peter ii. 9, is a *chosen generation,* and Paul testifies, Eph. i. 4, that they were "chosen in him," that is, in Jesus Christ the Son of God, "before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Thus far we have the testimony that the life which was given to the generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, was *Eternal Life,* and that it was, and still is so in Jesus Christ the Son of God, that no man can have the one without having the other, and no one can be destitute of the one without being destitute of the other. Such, then, is the seminal union and relationship of vitality, of immortality, that indissolubly unites the Head and Body of the church of God, that we are compelled to regard it as eternal.

The book of the complete generations of the earthly Adam was given in the day that God created man, (Gen. v. 1,) consequently before any of the children of Adam were born

of the flesh. And as the earthly Adam is the figure of the heavenly Adam, (Rom. v. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 47, 48,) we infer that the seed or generation of Jesus Christ the Son of God, is just as ancient as his Sonship. That is, we cannot from the Scriptures learn that our Lord Jesus Christ held the office, or occupied the position of Mediator, before the eternal life, which was with the Father, was given to us in him. That this is what constitutes the relationship between Christ, the seminal Head, and his seed, the Progenitor and the chosen generation.

We believe there are some who have held the idea that the flesh of our Redeemer, in which he was born of the Virgin, which suffered on the cross, was laid in the tomb, and which was raised from the dead, was begotten and brought forth by what they call an eternal generation, and so existed a human body and soul, from the ancients of eternity. If that theory be true, we have not so learned it, and must wait for clearer light on that subject. If what is called the humanity of Christ was so generated and did so exist before all time, then, instead of his assumption of our flesh, instead of his taking on him the seed of Abraham, or being made of a woman in his advent to this world, the whole race of mankind must have assumed his human nature when they were born of the flesh. And furthermore, we see no reason why it was expedient for him to be made of a woman, in order to be made under that law which the human family were under, as that law was binding on all human beings, until they are redeemed from its dominion by his one offering of himself without spot unto God. Until these difficulties which, to a very little mind like ours, are insuperable, are obviated, we are unable to indorse this speculation.

Another, to us, equally untenable theory, called eternal generation of the Son of God, sets forth, that his supreme Godhead is a derivative Godhead; that it is not original, self-

existent, independent and eternal. This theory, as it appears to us, seems to deny all that is essential to his Godhead. How can we conceive of absolute Godhead that has descended by generation or otherwise from any producing source higher than himself? That Christ exists in a Sonship which is begotten of the Father, is clearly demonstrated in the Scriptures, and confirmed by his own declarations, but this we understand to be in relation to what he is as Head and life of his church. But that he also is the eternal, self-existent God, the Jehovah, is equally demonstrated in the Scriptures, and in the personal experience of every saint. For if he is not God in an absolute and unrestricted sense, he cannot be the Savior. He says: "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." We must, therefore, be excused from indorsing a doctrine, however popular or plausible, that would rob us of a Savior, or present him in a character in which we are forbidden to worship him. This doctrine of a begotten Godhead is, to us, equivalent to a denial of his Godhead in all but a nominal sense. Nor does the fine-spun reasoning of his being eternally begotten, remove the difficulty. The effect would be the same, whether begotten in eternity or in time. Alike it must and would imply a begetting or producing God, anterior to his development as God; while, to our view, the denial of his self-existence is a denial that he exists at all, as an absolute, eternal, independent and self-existent God. The argument, that the son is as old as his father, that a father cannot exist without a son, is quite too feeble to bring conviction to our mind. Stripped of all artificial verbage, the naked question returns; Is Jesus Christ absolutely, eternally, independently, underivedly, the very supreme and eternal God? To this question we emphatically answer, **Yes!** and as such we hope to worship and adore him when the earth and heavens shall be no more; and even now we have no sweeter song to sing than,

"Jesus, my God, I know his name,
His name is all my trust;
Nor will he put my soul to shame,
Nor let my hope be lost."

Middletown, N.Y.
February 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 305-308

ETERNAL LIFE.

"This is the true God, and eternal life." - 1 John v. 20.

That this testimony is given by the inspired apostle concerning our Lord Jesus Christ, we presume but few if any will dispute, since there is no other character or being found in heaven or earth to whom we can apply these titles without involving the sin of blasphemy. The whole theme of John in this epistle, as well as in all his writings, was to bear record or testimony of him, and to show by the most indisputable testimony that he is as here declared, the true God, and eternal life. It is highly important that the children of God should be instructed in regard to his being, his attributes, his fullness, and of the relationship subsisting between him and them; and to meet this necessity the Holy Ghost inspired John to write unto the scattered family of God that they may have fellowship with each other, and that their joy may be full. (1 John i. 1-4.)

As the doctrine declared in our text involves the fellowship of the saints one with another, and their fellowship also with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, how very important it is that we in striving to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, should search diligently these Scriptures which testify of him.

Two important points are established by the declarations of our text. First, that Jesus Christ is the ·true God, and secondly, that he is the eternal life. On these two points we will offer a few remarks for the prayerful consideration of our readers.

First. He is *the* true God. It is not said that he is *a* true God, as though there were a plurality of true Gods: for the Scriptures proclaim but One living and true God: and he

himself has said, "I am God, and beside me there is no other." Hence the definite article is used to signify that Jesus Christ is the same God of whom Moses testified unto Israel saying, The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath thee are the everlasting arms. He is the same God who said, by Isaiah, unto the seed of Israel, Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else. Yea, he is that very God who has said he will have no other god before him. He is therefore called, The only wise God, our Savior. And in our text he is also distinguished from all false gods, or imaginary deities, the *true* God. This descriptive characteristic, implies that there are those that are called gods, and worshiped as such, that are not true. Jesus himself testified, all that ever came before him, were thieves and robbers: and he admonished his disciples that many *false* christs would come, and commanded them to beware of them.

He is the true God; all others who claim that honor, or who are revered as such, are false, delusive idols, whether they be of gold or silver, or any material substance, or existing only in the vain imagination of their worshipers. But when we claim that Jesus Christ is the only true and living God, we hold that all the fullness of the eternal Godhead dwells in him. The eternal Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and his Father are one. The Holy Spirit of the Lord God, in all his infinity is given to him without measure or limitation; it dwells in him, and is one with him. All that constitutes the Godhead, with all the attributes and perfections belong to him, and are essential to his nature, so that in the absence of any of them, if it were possible that any of them could be absent from him, he would be disqualified to be a *Savior,* or to be worshiped. God has declared that he is God and beside him there is no Savior, and he has forbidden his creatures to worship any but himself, therefore in worshiping Christ, we worship none other than the true God. The Father, the Word

and the Holy Ghost, notwithstanding these personal distinctions by which they are severally set forth in the record of truth, are but the one only living and true God, for these three are one. In his eternal Godhead we hold therefore, in distinction from the views advanced by those who lately assailed our faith on this subject, that Christ, in his Godhead, is self-existent, independent and eternal. That his Godhead in unbegotten and underived, it is the Godhead of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, and we would as soon think of applying derivation to the Father or Spirit, as to that fullness of the Godhead which is embodied in our Lord Christ.

Although he is the true God, equally and identically with the Father and the Holy Ghost, he also sustains and most gloriously fills a mediatorial identity, in which he is as fully identified as one with his church, as in his Godhead he is one with his Father. Hence our apostle not only declares him to be the true God, but also proclaims him as the eternal life. He himself declares, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life." "I am the Resurrection and the Life." The scriptural record of this Eternal Life, as given by the apostle John, and by all inspired writers, finds its origin in the eternal Father; and hence its eternity. "That which was from the beginning, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that Eternal Life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." - 1 John i. 1-8. The manifestation of this eternal life which was with the Father, is represented as a begetting, a bringing forth, a setting up, and a Sonship, while its incarnation extended the manifestation to the saints on earth, so that they could see with their eyes, and handle the Word of life. Let us not forget that this Life is eternal, the manifestation is not the

origination of it; for before it was manifested, it was with the Father. The begetting, or birth, is not the origination of that life which is made manifest by a birth. This eternal Life, is the Life which our Lord Jesus Christ is unto his *body* the church, which is the fullness of him that filleth all in all. "For me to live is Christ." "When he who is our life shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory." When this eternal life was manifested, of course it appeared, and in it all the saints were and are manifested in glory, even in that glory which the divine Mediator had with the Father before the world was. This is what we understand to be the eternal vitality, or immortality of the church of God. It was with the eternal Father, hid with Christ in God, and it was given unto the saints together with all that pertains to life and godliness, in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son, whom God has given to be the Head, Life and Immortality of the church, which is his body; all the members of which the onmiscient eye of the Father did see, yet being unperfect, and in his book all its members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them.

These views, if correct, involve what is called the doctrine of Eternal Vital Union.

That in the life of all the saints of God is one life, it is Christ, and Christ is eternal, as the Immortality of his body. The manifestation of this eternal life involves a spiritual generation, proceeding from God the Father, in manifestation of the eternal Life which was with him, and all this eternal life with all spiritual blessings, was given us in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Hence, in the Sonship of Christ is found all our vital relationship to God. This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and the life is in his Son, so completely identified with the Sonship of Christ that he that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son

hath not life. For he only hath immortality dwelling in the light. The children of God having spiritual, eternal life given them in Christ before the world began, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; they are a seed that shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation.

This is the doctrine of the Bible on the subject of the true God, and Eternal Life, and a prominent and fundamental doctrine of the apostolic Baptists in all ages, and in all parts of the world. It sets forth Eternal, Unconditional Election, and life given to the chosen or elected people of God, before the world began. Yet there are those now, as probably there have been in past ages, who would confuse the minds of the saints, in order to rob them of the comfort which an understanding of this subject inspires. John says, These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. Satan and his legions oppose the doctrine, traduce, misrepresent and persecute those who hold, and proclaim this doctrine. Not because Satan has any hope of being able with all his allies on earth, in or out of the christian profession, to overturn or destroy it, but the joy of the saints cannot be full without the consolation of this doctrine, the object of the powers of darkness is to prevent the fullness of joy which the subject inspires.

May the Lord lead our minds by his Spirit into this and all truth, and deliver us from all error and delusions, for Jesus' sake, and then we can well afford to bear all the reproach which may be heaped on us for the truth's sake.

"Then let the loudest storm arise,
Let tempests mingle earth and skies,
No fatal shipwreck shall we fear,
For Christ, our life, is always near."

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 186 - 190

ETERNAL LIFE vs. TIME LIFE

Our Savior has said of that people whom he calls his sheep, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them ETERNAL LIFE; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." — John x. 27, 28. And again, the apostle says, "The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." — Romans vi. 23. When the word eternal is applied to God in the scriptures, we understand that it means something more than an extended existence from some given or implied date, onward interminably; for it also means without "beginning of days or end of life," and that which is like the Son of God, "from everlasting to everlasting." — Heb. vii. 3; Psalm xc. 1, 2. Webster defines the word **eternal as** meaning without beginning or end, but allows its application to whatever is of endless duration; but in a scriptural sense we understand it to be used only as applicable, in its full extent, to that which distinguishes eternal things from things of time, or things temporal from things eternal, as defined by divine inspiration, thus, "While we look not to the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Evidently the things of time, as contrasted with eternal things, are called temporal; for they are finite, transitory and limited, both as to beginning and ending.

Now if, according to this definition of the word eternal, the first or earthy Adam and his posterity had possessed eternal life, how could death have passed on them? or with what propriety could it be said, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life?" How could they be in need of that gift, if their Adamic life was eternal, in this sense of the word eternal?

We are slow to believe that any intelligent being will deny that the eternal life which Jesus says he gives to his sheep is a life of a higher order than that which was given to mankind in the earthy Adam. If that life which was given to Adam, and to all his posterity in him, had been incorruptible and eternal, it could not have become corrupt, for the very meaning of the word incorruptible is applicable only to that which cannot possibly become corrupted; but corruption and mortality are too clearly developed in all the human race to admit of any doubt. “Death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” — Rom. v. 12.

That the life which was given to Adam, when “man became a living soul,” was liable to corruption and death, is clearly implied in what was said to him by his Creator concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: “For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” — Gen. ii. 17. If man had been incorruptible, he could not have corrupted himself by disobedience, and to the extent of involving all his then undeveloped posterity in corruption, depravity and death. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners.” — Rom. v. 12, 19. And “Sin hath reigned unto death.” “For the wages of sin is death.” Now if man had been, as a natural man, incorruptible, he could not have corrupted himself and his posterity in the corruption of either sin or death. But seeing that Adam, as the earthy parent of all mankind, has by his disobedience involved all his posterity in corruption and death, consequently all who descend from him by ordinary generation are born of his corrupted and corruptible seed; and as all seed is restricted by a decree of God, to bring forth after its kind, so all who are born of the seed of the earthy Adam develop only his corrupted and depraved nature. Surely no nature can be born of the flesh of a higher order than the nature which Adam himself possessed; and all mankind are his children in the flesh, and

possess and deve1op his earthy nature. And if any of his children could be born again of the flesh, or if they could be born a thousand times of the flesh, it would not change their nature. No birth, whether natural or spiritual, can produce or bring forth any other than the nature which has produced it.

The nature of Adam before he sinned was incorrupt, for God pronounced it “very good ;” but even as it came from the creative hand of God, it was not incorruptible, for if it had been, it could never afterward become corrupt. Anything that is liable to corruption is corruptible, and such was the nature of the earthy Adam, as the natural head and progenitor of our race, in whom all mankind have their creation. It was not only corruptible, but corrupt, before any son or daughter was born to him, for he possessed no incorruptible seed by which to multiply and replenish the earth. All who are born unto him are born then of seed corrupted, and incapable of bringing forth other than a corrupted prodigy. And as the corruption of Adam’s nature involved death, “so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Thus we are told in the word, that by one man’s offense death reigned, and that “sin hath reigned unto death.” — Romans v. 17, 21. In this same chapter we are told that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and that, as in the figure, sin and death have come upon all men unto condemnation; so by the higher nature of the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, the head and spiritual progenitor of a chosen generation, the free gift of life and immortality has come upon all who, by being born of God, are made partakers of the divine nature. “That as sin hath reigned unto death,” by the earthly Adam, to all his seed, “even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord,” unto that seed which shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation. — Psa. Xxii. 30.

Now as all who are born of the flesh are born of corruptible seed, and develop the fleshly nature of Adam, so all who are born of God are born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and the nature produced by the incorruptible seed differs as widely from our earthly nature as death and life, as sin and holiness, or as widely as the sources from whom they came, the one from Adam, and the other from Christ.

God in creation has given to all mankind mortal life in the earthly Adam, and he has given, by generation from himself, to all the children of the second Adam, eternal life. Our life in the flesh, in its nature and kind, is temporal, natural, corruptible, mortal, and sadly depraved; and it was provided for and given to mankind in Adam by the creative power of God; while our spiritual life has its fountain and origin in the self-existent God. This life, we are told, 1 John i. 2, "was with the Father." It is and was hid with Christ in God. — Col. iii. 3. And was given us in Christ, according to the record of heaven. — 1 John v. 11, 12. This life is Christ, and proceeds from the eternal Father by generation and birth, thus securing vital relationship, as sons of God, and joint heirship with our Lord Jesus Christ. Had the gift of life been but an extension of our natural, Adamic life interminably, it would neither be eternal life in the proper sense of the word, nor would it develop any vital relationship to God. But it is a sonship in the Son-ship of the Son of God, who is himself the eternal life of all his heirs. Well may we dwell with delight upon the words of the beloved John, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God." — 1 John iii. 1.

In speaking of the priesthood of Christ, it is said, "Who is made (a priest) not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life." — Hebrews vii. 16. And in the third verse of the same chapter we are told that

this endless life is without beginning of days or end of life. And in speaking of the superlative glory of his regal supremacy, it was said to the Son, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever," &c. "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thy hands: they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall **wax old as** doth a garment: and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." — Heb. i. 8-12. **David, in the spirit of** prophecy, has said of him, "Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee, and thou gayest it him, even length of days forever and ever, his glory is great in thy salvation: honor and majesty hast thou laid on him; for thou hast made him most blessed forever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance." — Psa. Xxi. 3-6.

These scriptures, if we understand them, testify of Christ in his Mediatorial relation to the church, which is his body, and perfectly harmonize with 1 John i. 2, and v. 11-13. And this testimony is given that those unto whom it is addressed may know that they have eternal life, and that this eternal life is in the Son of God. This life of the body, the church, is the life which the Son asked for. It was with the Father, hidden in God, and was given to the church in Christ. For "the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Thus, as our natural or temporal life was given to us, and hidden for us in the earthly Adam, and developed by ordinary generation, so our spiritual, eternal life was given to us, and hidden for us with Christ in God, and is made manifest to us experimentally by extraordinary generation and the new birth. Our natural birth from Adam is of a corruptible seed, which is mortal; but our new birth is of incorruptible seed, which is both spiritual and immortal. In our Adamic life, our relation is to the earth, and of the earth, earthy; but in our

life in Christ, our relation is established in his Sonship, and as sons of God in his Sonship, and heirs of God in the heirship of him, "Who being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, is the appointed heir of all things." This heir-ship is established in the relationship of that eternal life which was with the Father, in which the head and body are, and were, and forever shall abide in vital eternal union; one with Christ in this eternal vitality, even as he is one with the eternal Father in the Godhead.

As our natural birth of the flesh brings us forth, in our fleshly, earthly nature, as the degenerate plants of a strange vine, only capable of producing grapes of gall, in clusters that are bitter, so our spiritual, eternal life in Christ is brought forth by being born of the Spirit, as plants which God's right hand has planted, that God may be glorified in us, as branches of the true and living Vine, of which the Father is himself the Husbandman, that our fruit may be unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. The apostle John, in the closing verses of his first epistle, reminds the little children, to whom he writes, of three things which he says we know. First, "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." Second, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." Third, "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

How do we know that whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin? We know it because nothing that is corruptible can be born of incorruptible seed; and therefore, as the Holy Ghost has declared by the mouth and pen of the inspired apostle, we know that none of the corruptions of our flesh

are born of God, for they are only evil continually. Our flesh, with all its elements, is depraved, and there is nothing good in it; but it is born of the flesh, and therefore it wars against the spirit which is born of God. “They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally (or fleshly) minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” This distinction is made between the two natures, impersonated as two men, yet both dwelling in every Christian; one is called the old man, the other is called the new man. The old man is born of the flesh, and is flesh, always in bitter opposition to all that is spiritual and good; the other, which is called the new man, is born of the Spirit, and is not a child of the flesh, for it is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. One of these men is under the power of death, for death has passed on it because of sin; the other is life because of righteousness. One is corrupt, with all its deeds; the other cannot sin, because it is born of God, and the incorruptible seed of God remains in him, and there.. fore he cannot sin, hence the Christian, who embodies both the old and the new man, is admonished to put off the old man, and to put on the new man; because “they that are in the flesh (or old man) cannot please God,” and “to be carnally (fleshly) minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” “This I say, then, Walk after the spirit, (new man,) and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye (Christians, who possess both the old man and the new man) cannot do the things that ye would.” — Gal. v. 16, 17. By this array of Bible testimony, corroborated by our dai1y experience, we know that whosoever and whatsoever is born of God sinneth not; and knowing this, we cannot believe that our flesh with its corruptions is born of God, or that any pure, spiritual or heavenly aspiration or element that we possess is born of the flesh.

And being in possession of this knowledge, we know that we are of God; his spirit witnessing with our spirit that we are born of God. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." — John xvii. 3. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true." How else could we have this knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? For we must admit the truth of Jesus Christ's testimony, that this knowledge is eternal life, according to John xvii. 3. We know it, then, because Christ has declared it; and as he has given us understanding, we know that we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. And as he is in the Father, and we are in him, therefore our life is hid with Christ in God. The church is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father, and he and the Father are one, (not two); for all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in and belongs to the Son. And the church is one with Christ, even as he is one with the Father. God is in Christ. — 2 Cor. v. 19. Christ is in the Father. — John xvii. 21-23. The Head of the church is Christ. — Eph. i. 22. And the Head of Christ is God. — 1 Cor. xi. 3.

This is the true God, and eternal life. This Jesus, who has come in the flesh, who is in and one with the Father, is the true God; all others are imaginary and false. "He that hath seen him, hath seen the Father; for he is in the Father, and the Father is in him." — John xiv. 9, 10. This is not only the true God, but he, being the true God, is eternal life. He is most truly the "blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality (or eternal life) dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." — 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

As Christ only hath immortality, or eternal life, he is himself the life, the eterna1 life and immortality of his church, his

body, and of all the members of that body. He only hath it. It was not found in Adam. No man hath or can see or approach unto it, for it is hid with Christ in God. And although he gives this eternal life unto as many as the Father has given him, it is only as he gives himself to them, for this life is in the Son; so that he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life, neither have they power, capacity or desire to **approach unto it.**

This, then, being the true God, in distinction from all other gods, God's little children are admonished to keep themselves from idols. To trust in or worship any other than the true God, who in all his eternal fullness dwells bodily in Christ, is idolatry. And to ascribe eternal life to any other than the true God, is idolatry. Or to ascribe the power to approach unto the true God and eternal life to any human power, is idolatry. Therefore, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times
June 1, 1879

Republished:
Volume 127, No. 9
September 1959

ETERNAL, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION.

IN the third item of our prospectus, we are pledged to maintain inviolably the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election. Some of our opponents have been kind enough to interpret our prospectus in such a manner as to lay us under the necessity of giving our readers more fully to understand our views. The language in which this article is headed is neither vague nor ambiguous; nor does this subject require a volume to be written, in order to convince the wise what doctrinal ideas we wish to convey. Yet as we have only asserted the sentiment as a matter of faith from which we shall in no case depart, it remains for us to show that this doctrine is scriptural, and in proving it to be so we will give a sufficient reason why we cannot depart from it in conducting this paper. Having already given, in our former numbers, our views of the sovereignty, immutability, &c., of the great Jehovah, our present work will be to prove that he has absolutely, eternally and unconditionally chosen or elected a portion of mankind unto salvation, through Jesus Christ.

With that class of our readers who take the bible as the man of their counsel and the standard of their faith, nothing more will be required of us. at this time, than a fair presentment of the word of God. Neither human language nor human wisdom can set forth the doctrine in a more clear or positive light than that which is left by the Holy Ghost, in the sacred pages *of* the Old and New Testaments.

Let it be understood that our work is only to state the doctrine, and to prove it to be in accordance with, and founded upon the word and testimony of the God of truth; we do not undertake to make the unregenerate understand or love it; for such a work we freely confess ourself

inadequate; nor do we consider it any disparagement for us to own that God alone is able to bestow the knowledge and love of truth upon those who possess it not. We shall attempt to show that First, God has chosen or elected a people unto eternal life; second, that this election took place in eternity, or before the foundation of the world; and third, that this doctrine is not founded on any conditions existing between the elector and the elected.

First, that God has an elect people, we call to witness the following portions of holy writ, viz:

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath *chosen*." – Psalms xxxiii, 12. "And he brought forth his people with joy, and his *chosen* with gladness." – cv. 5. "That I may see the good of thy *chosen*, that I may rejoice in the goodness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance." – cvi. 5. "The beasts of the field shall honor me, the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to *my people, my chosen*." – Isa. xliii. 20. "But for the *elect's* sake whom he hath *chosen*," &c. – Mark xiii. 20. "Go thy way, for he (Saul) is a *chosen* vessel unto me." – Acts ix. 15. "Salute Rufus, *chosen* in the &c.–Rom. xvi. 13. "But ye are a *chosen generation*, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light." – 1 Peter ii. 9. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is the Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and *chosen*, and faithful." – Rev. xvii. 14. "But for the *elect's* sake those days shall be shortened. For there shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch, that if it were possible they should deceive the very *elect*. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather

together his *elect*, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." – Matt. xxiv. 22, 24, 31. "And shall not God avenge *his own elect*, which cry day and night unto him." – Luke, xviii. 7. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of *God's elect?*" – Rom. viii. 33. "Even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the *election of grace*. What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election* hath obtained it and the rest were blinded. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes; but as touching the *election*, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." – Rom. xi. 5, 7,28.

Second, the eternity of God's election is set forth in the strongest terilis by the apostles, thus, "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself; according to the good pleasure of his will, wherein *he hath made us*, accepted in the beloved. In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." – Eph. i. 4, 5, 6, 11, also ii. 10. "Peter an apostle, &c;, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithyna, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," - I Peter i. 1, 2. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did *predestinate* them he also called; and whom lie called, them he also justified and whom he justified, them he also glorified." – Rom. viii. 29, 30. "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit,

and belief of the truth." – 2 Thes. ii. 13. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, (the beast) whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." – Rev. xiii. 8. These with many like scriptures, plainly demonstrate the eternity of the election of the people of God unto salvation, through Jesus Christ their Lord. Arminians may well tremble to meet the array of scriptures here employed to refute their cavils against eternal election. But we must show that God's election is unconditional, as far as it relates to those elected. The weight of this part of our argument may, for the present, rest upon the three following propositions, viz:

First, the fact that the election took place in eternity, precludes the possibility of its resting on conditions to be performed by the people elected. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good nor evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth," &c.

Second, there is not the mention of a condition (as resting upon the elect) in the bible; and if this all important doctrine, which involves our eternal destiny in its weight had been suspended upon conditions to be performed by man, we may assuredly believe that God would have made known a fact of such awful moment, in his word.

Third, the scripture expressly forbids the idea of conditions, either in regard to election, or salvation in any form whatever. To establish this point we hear the inspired apostle say, "By grace are ye saved through faith, that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast."

Again, if there be conditions in the election of grace, resting on the creature to perform, we would for the moment inquire

what are the conditions? Is it works? No, for if it be of works, it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work." Does the doctrine then require that the sinner shall be willing on his part to be saved? No, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy. But did not the choice of God embrace the best kind of sinners, such as are not so vile, polluted and depraved as the rest of mankind? No, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." But did not God choose unto salvation such as would be born of pious parents – parents who would dedicate them by infant or adult sprinkling and train them up to religion? No, "Though Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, as I live saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter."

"Cursed is man that trusteth in man, or that maketh flesh his arm." But were they elected on condition that they should use what is in the present day denominated "The means of grace," viz: to give their property to charitable societies, and so fill up the "Lord's treasury?" No, for "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing." "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Now we inquire if election or salvation be conditional, on what condition does it rest? Let the Arminian answer if he can.

But to the everlasting exclusion of all such heart-sickening, God dishonoring, soul-revolting, devil-pleasing delusion, Thus saith the Lord God, whose word endureth forever, "Behold O my people, I will open your graves, and cause, you to come up out of your graves," &c. Thus saith the Lord God, unto these bones, "Behold, I will cause breath to enter in you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin and put breath in you and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.

And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea I will be their God, and they shall be my people." – Ezekiel xxxiii., see also Heb. viii, 10, 11, 12. "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least to the greatest: for I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities will I remember no more." Here, from the uncorrupted fountain breaks forth a refulgent torrent of light and truth, sweeping away all refuges of lies, and reiterating Jehovah's declarations. "I will, and they shall," while each redeemed soul quickened and made alive by the Holy Ghost, and taught by the Father, joins in the heavenly melody to sing:

"Sons we are through God's election,
Who in Jesus Christ believe;
By eternal destination,
Sovereign grace we here receive.
Lord, thy mercy
Does both grace and glory give.

Pause, my soul! adore and wonder!
Ask, O why such love to me?
Grace has put me in the number,
Of my Savior's family.
Hallelujah!
Thanks, eternal thank to thee.

Since that love had no beginning,
And shall never, never cease;
Keep, O keep me, Lord, from sinning!
Guide me in the way of peace!
Make me walk in
All the paths of holiness.

When that blessed habitation,
Which my God has foreordained;
When in glory's full possession,
I with saints and angels stand;
Free grace only
Shall resound from God's right hand."

New Vernon, N. Y.
February 27, 1933.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 33 - 39

ETERNAL UNION

Westville, OH., April 19, 1864.

Elder Beebe: I have been a reader of your paper, the "*Signs of the Times,*" for some months past, and have been well entertained with many precious truths therein presented. Some ideas, however, I have been unable to comprehend, owing perhaps to a dull understanding on my part. Nevertheless, my desire is to have a current knowledge of the teaching of God's word. And as I noticed in a recent editorial that any scriptural subject upon which brethren desire to be enlightened, is deemed worthy of your notice; therefore, I thought it might be of profit to myself, and others perhaps, who are also young in the cause, to solicit information through the "Signs of the Times" on those points of doctrine that are obscure to my mind. I profess to be a regular Predestinarian Baptist, and have a hope that a few years since I learned by experience that I was a lost sinner, helpless and undone, justly condemned by reason of disobedience to the law of God; at which time I felt that what was said by the mouth of God's prophet of ancient Israel was true respecting my case: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" but am now permitted to indulge a hope (though sometimes very faint), that I have the same *Almighty Savior* that Israel had for his. However incredulus I may be respecting other things, and however much I groan under a sense of this, yet it is a sad reality which I daily feel, I am unholy. I think sometimes that I can very pertinently adopt the language of Paul, and say, "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (a) My hope is that when the morn of eternity dawns, I will awake fully with the likeness of Christ, and join in the choir above, to be forever employed in repeating his praise, and recounting the wonders of his grace, that a sinner

condemned to die should be raised to a crown of glory on high. This hope is based on the belief that God did, in the Counsel of Eternity, make choice in his Son of a people, of whom Paul says, "They were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Ephesians 2:3)." (b)And further he informs us that the design of this choice was that they should be *holy* and without blame before him in love; and in accordance therewith, they are made the happy recipients of all spiritual blessings, to be enjoyed in heavenly places in Christ, having predestinated them unto the *adoption* of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. O glorious hope of eternal blessedness! Surely none who are sighing for deliverance from sin, and are longing for that which is perfect to come, can harbor thoughts of disrespect towards God's distinguishing love. Here is the Eternal Source, from whence the ungodly and the profane are made holy and conformed to the image of Christ. Here, by the sovereign act of Heaven's King, untold millions of Adam's polluted and sin-plagued posterity are secured for the enjoyment of life and immortality. Here is it fixed by immutable decree that the fetters of sin shall be broken and the tyranny of Satan overthrown. Here it is emblazoned in glittering letters, which are unmistakable, that the stranger and the alien, the apostate foreigner and the child of wrath are constituted children of God and heirs of the Eternal inheritance. (Galatians 4:5-7)(c)

Among those invaluable blessings of the Spirit which the elect of God enjoy as a part of their patrimony here, an evidence of their justification stands of infinite importance. How shall a man be just with God? is a question which must have baffled forever the reason of man, and remained eternally unknown to angels. But the God of angels and of men is brought to view in the sacred oracles, as the Judge who justified the ungodly (Romans 4:5), (d) In consequence of which Paul could with defiance challenge all intelligences to

lay anything to the charge of God's elect; and when interrogated as to how he could be so defiant in throwing out a challenge so broad, knowing that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, his reply is, "It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is ever at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Here the spotless righteousness of the adorable Redeemer is presented as a dress for the naked sinner. Here the purple fountain, filled with Immanuel's blood, is brought to view to wash away his guilt and cleanse his leprous soul. And here his glorious name, who bled and died on Calvary's tree, is proclaimed as the Lord our Righteousness. All glory be to him who took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and thus whilst vailed in flesh did bear the law's tremendous curse, and endure the dread stroke of incentive justice, that his people might be freed therefrom. This righteousness is to all and upon all them that believe, without regard to their former condition, or respect to their parentage or genealogy whatever; no previous excellency can be admitted as a plea; for there is no difference, as in Romans 3:22, (e) well may David say, and Paul, with all the saints in every age with acclamation loud and long did repeat it, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness, without works." That man can say with Mr. Toplady:

"The terrors of law and of God
With me can have nothing to do;
My Savior's obedience and blood
Hide all my transgressions from view."

But as my design is to solicit information from those who are older and wiser than myself, it will not be considered presumptuous, I trust, if I refer to those ideas which I have been unwilling to receive, or of which perhaps I have had a misunderstanding. I dislike very much to see among Baptists

a manifest spirit of unfriendly criticism, but what would appear to be infinitely worse and presumptuous in the extreme would be for a boy to assail with a view to demolish the views of an old father in the ministry; at least, it would be showing a disrespect to the opinions of those whom we would venerate. I trust I shall not appear guilty of either. The first to which I shall refer I find in Volume Thirty-two, No. 5, p. 37. In your reply to a request on the fifth chapter of Romans, you say that the whole human family were a unit in the first Adam, that they all acted in him, sinned in him, and were made sinners by his transgression. Again on page 46, No. 6, you say, "Being in him from his creation, we sinned in him before any of us were brought into personal manifestation; hence, when death passed upon him it passed on all that he was, as the embodiment of his entire race." Now, if I apprehend the meaning of your words, the conclusion is this: that all of Adam's posterity were created in and simultaneous with him, were all embodied in and had an actual existence with him, and in consequence of what they did in him in the first transgression, death is passed upon all. Thus far we agree, or rather thus far light has been given. But in the 14th verse it is said, "Adam is a figure of him that was to come, which is Christ," of which you say, page 37, No. 5, "The second Adam, the spiritual progenitive Head of the spiritual family, or posterity or seed, embodied them all in himself before the world began, and as sin, condemnation and death came by the one earthly Adam, so justification unto life and immortality came by the second, or anti-typical Adam, to all his seed." Again you say on page 46, No. 6, "As it was totally impossible for any who were in the loins of the earthly Adam to escape the guilt and consequences of his disobedience, so it is also and equally impossible that any who were created in Christ Jesus, chosen and embodied in him before the foundation of the world should fail to participate in his righteousness, and the free gift by it unto justification of life." Now, my understanding of your views is

this: That judgment unto condemnation and death is passed upon all the seed of the first Adam, in effect, of their participating in his transgression. (Like as it is said by Paul of Levi, who paid tithes in Abraham; for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him. Hebrews 7:9.) Likewise after the same similitude, righteousness is imputed to all those who were created and embodied in the second Adam, by virtue of their being participants in the one great transaction that brought justification unto life, for, in effect of what they did in him. (f) This would seem to conflict with what I regard as a Christian experience. (g)The sinner who feels his just condemnation does not think for a moment of throwing the responsibility for his guilt upon the first Adam, or any one else; but, as he vents his plaintive sigh, it is with bitter remorse he cries, "I have ruined my soul." But now suppose the Savior comes to calm his troubled breast, and speaks his sins forgiven, how changed the scene becomes! At once he quits his mournful cry to ask from whence this heavenly message came; but ere the wasting moment is gone, his tongue begins the heavenly theme, "Salvation, and glory to God!" In Christ he views his all. But now we will present our similitude to him, and tell him that like as he involved himself in guilt by participating in the act of the first Adam, in like manner has he freed himself from condemnation by acting a part in the work of the second Adam. (h) Such a thought would be repulsed with utter abhorrence; for he says, "When I was yet *without strength* in due time Christ died for the *ungodly.*" This will not do; but I cannot arrive at any other conclusion, if justification be based on the supposition of being created and embodied in Christ before the world began. (i) You say that when death passed upon the first Adam, it passed upon all that he was, his entire embodiment. (j) Shall we say the same respecting the seed of the second Adam? Were they all embodied in him when he was delivered for their offences and rose again for their justification? Were the patriarchs and prophets there,

with all the train of saints who fell asleep before the Holy Child was born? Were they all embodied in him when on Calvary he cried, "It is finished!" If not, I can't see how justification could be based on the supposition of an actual embodiment. None could have been held amenable for the act of the first Adam, but those who composed a part of himself when the deed was done. (1)And could such a thing have been that any of his posterity were separated from him prior to his fall? I presume they had not been involved in his guilt. (m) It appears from scripture that his wife, though formerly taken from his own side, acted separately in incurring the guilt of sin upon herself; and had either of the first conjugal pair abstained from the indulgence of sin, they had not been involved by the guilt of the other. (n) Hence it appears evident to me that if justification comes in the manner afore prescribed, then all the elect, or those that will ever be in heaven, must have been actually embodied in Jesus when the atonement was made, and they considered as sinners; for none others would need its benefits.

These, brother Beebe, are some of the thoughts that rushed into my head as I read your comments on the fifth of Romans. I hope, therefore, you will not think it impudence that I have written them out in order that you may set me right wherever I have misapprehended your meaning. A few queries for information, and I am done. Was Christ brought into being as a creature, simultaneous with his elect? Was the spiritual family of God ever corrupted in sin? Hoping to receive information, and pardon for imperfections, I will leave it for your disposal.

W. T. Pence.

Reply to Brother W. T. Pence:

It would afford us pleasure to be able to relieve the mind of our young brother, and of all others of all their perplexities and difficulties in understanding the testimony of the scriptures on the profound mystery of Godliness; but we freely confess, although we have been, as we hope, in the school of Christ more than fifty years, we still stand in need ourself to be instructed in the first principles of the gospel of Christ. Young as our brother may be in his Christian experience and profession, he probably has, or soon will have learned, that it is easier to ask questions in relation to the deep things of God than to give a satisfactory solution of every question that may arise. If the two queries at the conclusion of our brother's letter are intended to comprise the whole matter of his inquiry, we might come directly to the points designed for discussion. But if it be necessary to review the whole of his communication, and compare it with our own views, as expressed in all that we have written and published for the past thirty-two years on the subject of the eternal vital union of Christ and his church, and the union and identity of the earthly Adam and his posterity in the flesh, or even what we wrote on Romans 5, and published in No. 5 of the current volume, then indeed the field before us is very large.

As the queries referred to, if we understand their design and import, have a direct bearing, at least, on all the points wherein our brother asks for further light of us, we propose to attend first to them, and then we will review the entire letter, and remark on such passages as we have indicated by letters of the alphabet in their order. In doing this we shall require to be as brief as we can and make ourself understood, lest we swell our article to too great a length.

Query First. - "Was Christ brought into being as a creature simultaneous with his elect?"

Here our brother takes us beyond our depth; for we know nothing of Christ being brought into being as a creature at all. It is true, as an apostle has said, we have known Christ after the flesh; but henceforth know we him no more. If by creatureship, brother Pence means manifestation in his mediatorial character, or when the Word was made flesh, or was made under the law, made of a woman, to redeem them that were under the law, we hold that his elect were in him as the Christ of God, long anterior to his incarnation; as long anterior as his existence was to that of Abraham. See John 8:58. The scripture that speaks of him as the first-begotten from the dead, and the first-born of every *creature,* we understand as applicable only to his resurrection from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that slept. As the Son of God, we can attribute to him neither beginning of days nor end of life. All we can learn of his unexampled pedigree is that He was and is in the Father, and the Father is in Him: He and the Father are one. This is the true God and Eternal Life. And as Christ is the embodiment of the fullness of the Godhead, so the church of God is the embodiment of Christ. The Head of the church is Christ, and the Head of Christ is God. In this mystery of godliness, we only know Him as the brightness of his Father's glory and express image of his person, and all we know of the Father is revealed to us by and through him. Matthew 11:27. Luke 10:22. Neither do we understand that the "incorruptible seed" or Spirit of immortality in the saints of God is a created seed or life; for it is Christ in them the hope of glory, and it is called *Eternal Life.* An inspired apostle testifies that this Eternal Life was with the Father, and was manifested. I John 1:2. "And this is the record that God hath given to us, Eternal Life; and this life is in his Son (I John 5:11)." That which is eternal we understand to be without beginning or end. We can conceive of no period in time or in eternity when the Eternal Life and immortality of the church was not hidden with Christ in God. Christ is himself the Life. He only hath immortality dwelling in the Light. "And we know

that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true; even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life (I John 5:19-20)." This eternal life God has given to his children, not in the earthly Adam, who is of the earth earthy; but in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. If this eternal life were not the life of God, how could its impartation to us make us or manifest us as the sons of God? Can we be vitally the sons of a parent in whom we had no life or being before we were born? If so, what definite idea can we form of the relationship of parent and son? Are we indeed begotten and born of God? Is the life which we receive in the new birth a life that was with the Father and given to us in Christ, and called Eternal Life? Is it Christ? Is it the life of God in Christ? Or is it only an improvement of the life of the earthly Adam, which we have received by our first or natural birth of the flesh? If it be but an improvement made on the life developed by our fleshly birth, why is it so emphatically declared by both prophets and apostles, that all flesh is grass. But the incorruptible seed is by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever (I Peter 1:24-25). "That which is born of the flesh [or is the production of a fleshly birth] is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit (John 3:6)." And this spirit, which is born of the Spirit, is the Spirit of Christ, and it is Christ. "For to me to live *is Christ*(Philippians 1:21)." "Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me* (Galatians 2:20)." This Christ living in the Christian is what is called the *new man,* which after God, (not after man) is created in righteousness and true holiness. It is the *new man* which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him (Colossians 3:10). This creation is not natural, but spiritual a creation in Christ Jesus; not the making of something from nothing; but the gift of that Eternal Life, which John says was eternal and was with the Father. This Eternal Life was given

to the saints in his Son. It is this identity of life and immortality which *creates* or constitutes their vital union with Christ as their spiritual Head, and seminal progenitor. This life being given to the saints in the Son makes them one with Christ even as Christ is one with the Father; and in this manifestation (for John says *the life was manifested*) is presented to us the mediatorial relationship of Christ, both to the Eternal Father and to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. We can conceive of no period when Christ did not exist as the mediatorial Head of his church; nor can we conceive of the existence of the Head without the body of Christ. We now speak of his spiritual or mystical body. If it be admitted that they are one with Christ, even as is Christ one with God the Father, we can no more deny the eternal vital union of Christ and his members than we can deny the eternal identity of the Father and the Son in the Godhead.

As we know of no beginning of the existence of Christ, we will take the liberty to so change the form of the enquiry as to substitute the word *manifestation* for that of existence, and then we hesitate not to answer the question affirmatively. As the second Adam, his church - his bride - was always in him, as Eve was originally in the earthly Adam, or as the human race was all in Adam from his creation. But as we are extending our article too far for our limited space, we will now pass to consider the other question of brother Pence, viz.: "Was the spiritual family of God ever corrupted in sin?"

Answer: *The spiritual family of God* are terms which are used to denote the church of God in distinction from the world at large; and that family or church, as we have labored to show, sustain a two-fold relationship; that is, the constituents of the church or family of God sustain a relationship both to the flesh and the Spirit - both to the first

and the second Adam. In the one relationship, the members of that family were children of wrath even as others. They were *corrupted in sin,*sank down in depravity and death and ruin, in the first Adam; from which they are redeemed, washed, cleansed and made pure by the blood and righteousness of the second Adam. But their life in Christ Jesus, which is hid with him in God, was never corrupted, for the scriptures affirm that it is incorruptible. It being the life of God in our Lord Jesus Christ, given to us in him before the world began, secured or preserved in him, how could it be contaminated? Christ is himself that life, and he is holy, harmless, undefiled, and higher than the heavens. And further, this life, when developed in us by the new birth, still retains its immaculate purity; for there is no possibility of its being corrupted. We are born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and that which is absolutely incorruptible, never has, nor ever can be corrupted. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him." And that seed is, as we have proved, incorruptible. "And he cannot sin, because he is born of God (I John 3:9)." But we also have a nature which is born of a corruptible seed. The production of the fleshly birth is so completely corrupt that it is called corruption itself. In this bondage of corruption all the family of God are held as long as they remain in the flesh; as well after the new birth as before; and so much so that with their flesh (which is born of the flesh, of corruptible seed), they serve the law of sin; even when with the mind (for they have the mind and Spirit of Christ, which is born of an incorruptible seed), they serve the law of God. This corruption of the Adamic nature is of long standing, and is deep rooted, and will continue to develop its pollution until it shall ultimately be raised a spiritual body; "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." Why? Because "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither

doth corruption inherit incorruption." Hence the necessity. "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." These vile bodies are not yet changed; they are still Adam; for "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy." But they shall be changed, for Christ shall change them, and fashion them like unto his resurrected and glorified body. "For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Now they are mortal and corruptible, but when quickened by the Spirit that raised up Christ, and which dwells as the *new man* in all who are born of the Spirit, they shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Having dwelt perhaps too lengthily on the questions proposed, we, in conclusion, will briefly notice a few things marked by italics interspersed by us throughout the letter of brother Pence, for convenience of reference.

(a) This *mind* with which our brother serves the law of God is the mind of Christ, which Paul says we (his children) have; with it, he says, "I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh, the law of sin." Are not these the two natures or principles which Paul says are contrary one to the other, and which he designates as the flesh which is born of the flesh, and of corruptible seed, and in which he could find no good thing; and the other the Spirit, which is born of the Spirit? Does he not denominate the one the *old man* the outer man and the natural man - and the other the new man - the inner man and the spiritual man, which is born of God? By each and both of these he identifies himself. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Galatians 2:2 compared with Romans 7:20-23.) "Now if I do

that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God, after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," etc. Why does Paul use the personal pronoun *I* in a two-fold application to himself, saying, I live, yet not I, and the law of sin, yet it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me? Does he not here clearly define the living I to be the inward man, in distinction from the body of this death, from which he groaned to be delivered? Brother Pence has the same two natures or opposite identities in him; he feels the conflict raging. Can he tell us whether these were both born of God, or were they both born of the flesh? Or will he not rather say that this outward man is born of the flesh, and descended from the earthly Adam, and is the earthly Adam; and that the other, the new man, is born of God, and is a development in him of that spiritual eternal life which was with the Father, and was given him in Christ before the world began, and implanted in him by the new birth? We are mistaken if he will not say that all that is earthly, sensual and devilish in him he has derived from the world, the flesh and the devil; and all that is spiritual, holy and heavenly in him has come from God.

(b) It is important that we should read these scriptures very carefully, lest we should become confused by an unwarrantable mingling of passages which should be considered distinctly. True, Paul says to the saints which were at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings." But where? Not in earthly, but "in heavenly places." Not in the earthly Adam, but "in Christ Jesus." As in the earthly Adam God blessed us with all earthly blessings, including every green herb, and all the productions of the earth, the light and atmosphere of the heavens, and all the gifts of nature, so all spiritual blessings

of life, holiness and happiness, all the provisions of grace, mercy and peace, were given us in Christ Jesus. These gifts were not given according as we should earn or merit them, but "according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Now, what was in Christ Jesus, as set apart by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus? Was it our earthly or spiritual life? Were we, when chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world, dead in trespasses and sins? Had we then walked according to the course of this world, were we then children of wrath even as others? It appears to us that the children of God always were perfect in Christ, but no where else. This spiritual and blessed people, which thus stood in Christ as the children of God, by his divine purpose and decree, were ordained of God to a first and a second birth, to bring them into manifestation in their twofold character, in which Paul, and brother Pence, and every other Christian, find themselves, as Christians, while here in the flesh. Our relationship as children of God was not predicated upon our becoming "partakers of flesh and blood;" for the relationship was complete before Adam's dust was fashioned into a man. But for his own glory God ordained that his children should become in time partakers of flesh and blood, share in the apostasy of that flesh and blood, and in that condemnation consequent thereon, and from that condemnation and wrath be redeemed, and these bodies washed, cleansed, purified and adopted in due time into the fellowship and liberty of the children of God. Our life of God in Christ required no adoption; for it is born of God. As the children of God they have a glorious birthright; but as the children of Adam, we were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. That this adoption relates to the resurrection and immortality of our now mortal bodies is clear from the arguments of Paul in Romans 8:11-25. In our fleshly nature we have all sinned, and in Adam we all die.

Death has passed on all men; and those who are redeemed, freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, were by nature children of wrath. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus.

As we were sinners in the flesh, it behooved Christ to be made flesh for our redemption. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." To legally represent his children who had sinned in the flesh, he was made of a woman, made under the law, for it was under the law we stood guilty and condemned. He was therefore made under the law to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye the children of Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. We conclude that it was as indispensable for Christ to be born of the flesh, and take on him the seed of Abraham, in order to stand in our law place and bear our sins in his own body, and expiate our guilt, as it was that we should be born of his Spirit, and by the life brought forth in us by that birth become partakers of the divine nature, in order that we may reign with him in glory.

(c) As aliens and strangers we are brought nigh by the blood of Christ, together with the impartation to us of the spirit of adoption, while our vital relation to God is far more ancient

and eternal, based upon a life given us in Christ which was never alien to God, but forever hid with Christ in him, and this sonship is developed by a spiritual birth. The word constituted may embrace the idea, but we prefer the scripture word *adopted* in its application to the redemption of the purchased possession.

(d) Justification, as a legal act, is not effected by a mere arbitrary judicial decree of the Judge. God is not only the Judge, from whose decisions there is no appeal, but he is the Righteous Judge, and as such his decisions are in harmony with his eternal justice. And justice could not clear the guilty without an adequate atonement. Hence the apostle adds, "It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

(e) There certainly is no difference in regard to the depth of depravity and ruin into which all mankind are fallen, nor any creature excellence to commend one more than another to the saving favor of God, for salvation is by grace; but if our brother means that there was no difference of relationship to God; no special relation to Christ, or in other words, that the saints did not possess a sonship in Christ Jesus before the world began, we shall not be able to agree with him, for if a vital relationship to God through Christ is a spiritual blessing, all the saints at Ephesus, and all the faithful in Christ Jesus were blessed with it by God the Father, in Christ before the foundation of the world. As to their parentage in the flesh, there is no distinction, for they are all Adam; but in their spiritual relation they are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people," and it is because they are sons that God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son in their hearts, crying "Abba, Father."

(f) The apostle Paul, in I Corinthians 15, draws the parallel between the first and second Adam, and shows that as the first was made a living soul, the second was made a quickening Spirit; that the first is of the earth earthy, the second is the Lord from heaven. And then he adds that as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy, and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly, and this he applies to the death and resurrection of the saints. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "In Adam they die or are sown in corruption; in Christ they are raised in incorruption." And in his elucidation of this subject in Romans 5, he says that Adam is the figure of him that was to come, and thus illustrates the figure in its application to Christ as the anti-type: "As by one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death by sin, *and so* death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. But not as the offence so also is the free gift; for if through the offence of one man many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift, for the judgment was of one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto justification; for if by one man's offence death reigned by one," etc. "Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners," etc. Now, if these scriptures do not prove the position which we assumed in the article referred to by brother Pence, we must be even more dull of comprehension even than we had supposed. If our brother can tell us how it were possible for us to have been in Adam, as Levi was in Abraham, and not have sinned in him, or how Levi could have been in the loins of Abraham at the time referred to, and not have paid tithes to Melchisedec, we will also ask him to explain upon what principle we could be involved in condemnation, and under the reign of death, for Adam's offence. Has any decree consigning the children of men to die

and return to the dust been subsequently made or published? We have said in our former article that all the human race were a unit, in the person of Adam, when that unit transgressed, and when sin entered, and death by sin, and when death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. As none of Adam's posterity were born when sin and death entered, and as some of that posterity are probably not yet born, upon what other ground can we understand that "all have sinned," and as sinners, judgment has come upon all men to condemnation? But the apostle in showing in what sense Adam is the figure of Christ, represents him as such in his seminal and federal character, and that Christ, the second Adam or progenitive head of all the children of God, embodies them in vital union with himself, so as to make them partakers of his divine nature, as Adam's earthly children are partakers of his corrupt, depraved and fallen nature. No production or offspring of the fallen Adam can as such be holy or free from the pollution and mortality of his fallen nature, so nothing existing in or proceeding from Christ, the second Adam, can be unholy. A corrupt fountain cannot send forth pure streams, nor can a pure fountain send forth impure waters.

(g) This does not conflict with what we have understood Christian experience to be. It is true every quickened sinner is made to feel the dreadful corruption of his own heart, and his own personal transgressions rise like mountains before him with crushing weight, but this is not all. So far as his present acts are concerned, he hopes to find relief by reformation; he resolves to do better and to sin no more; but alas! he soon finds that there is a deep fountain of corruption within; that his whole nature is depraved; that he inherits a wicked nature from his earthly parent. It was so with the psalmist when he confessed that he was conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and from that cause he had gone

astray from the womb speaking lies, and the words of the poet become appropriate to his case:

"Lord I am vile, conceived in sin,
And born unholy and unclean;
Sprung from the man whose guilty fall,
Corrupts the race, and taints us all."

Not to extenuate his own vileness, but from a deep conviction of his sinfulness, both by nature and by practice; not to throw the blame off from himself, for what is he himself but Adam developed or multiplied?

(h) The views which we have expressed are justly liable to no such construction. The work of redemption, as we have tried to show, was performed by Christ in his incarnation. Himself bear our sins, not in his spiritual or mystical body, but in his own body which hung upon the tree. He suffered for us in the flesh, not in the spirit. He suffered for us in the flesh; his spirit did not die. When he yielded up the Ghost he committed his spirit into the hands of his Father. The revelation made by the Spirit to the heaven-born child of God is that the life which is communicated to him in his new birth by no means inflates him with pride or boasting, but rather leads him in amazement to exclaim, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God!" As Christ is "The only begotten of the Father," our sonship is in his sonship, as our life is in his life, for John says, this life which God has given us is in his Son, and Christ says it is eternal. This vital union, or union of life and immortality, which makes Christ and his members one, even as Christ and the Father are one, is that life wherein the saints, as chosen in him, were blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, before the foundation of the world. The work of redemption is quite another thing. That work, as we have shown, required that Christ should take our

nature on him, and come under the law which we in our own, not in his divine nature, have transgressed. So that as we from his fullness receive, and grace for grace, so he from our nature received our sins, and bore them in his own body on the tree. He received our sorrows, bore our griefs, and the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. But such is the nature and reciprocity of the union. We in him, and he in us, that eternal justice could hold him responsible for our sins, and aquit us from all the demands of the law for his righteousness sake. If we are Christ's, then we are Abraham's seed. Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, and in that incarnation suffered in the body of his flesh for us and in us. For such was the oneness and identity of Christ and his members, that when he died for them all then were they all dead, legally dead, for the law had exacted and received its utmost demands at his hand; hence we sing:

"With him his members on the tree
Fulfilled the laws demands;
'Tis I in them and they in me,
For thus the union stands.

"Since Jesus slept among the dead
His saints have nought to fear,
For with their glorious suffering Head,
His members sojourned there."

(i) The justification of the ungodly is based upon the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. He was delivered up for our offences, and raised again for our justification. We are not aware of having ever represented that our having been in Christ, before the world begun, superseded or rendered unnecessary the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet his death and sufferings would no more have justified the guilty, in the absence of this union, than the

punishment of an innocent person would remove the guilt of a criminal. How could Christ's death and resurrection have any more effect in taking away the sins of the elect than the sins of the non-elect, or the devils, if the elect had not stood in this vital and indissoluble union and relationship with him which we have described? Would my paying a ransom price for a property on which I never had any previous claim make the property my own? The right of redemption under the law belonged to the nearest of kin, and if our relation to Christ had not been anterior to our relation to Adam, and consequently prior to the claims of the law, Christ would not have been our nearest of kin; so in this view of the subject, though our justification required the incarnation, sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, yet the relationship of eternal vital union was and is the principal on which his mediatorial work is available to us, and in that sense we think no understanding Christian will regard the doctrine as repulsive or abhorrent.

(j) If we said too much in saying that death passed upon all that Adam embodied, will brother Pence be kind enough to tell us what part of Adam or his posterity death did not pass upon? We felt some confidence in reiterating the declaration of an inspired apostle: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned (Romans 5:12)." And how? If we can understand the meaning, it is this: As sin entered by one man, so death entered by one man, so death passed upon all men by one man; for that all have sinned in that one man.

(k) To all these interrogatives we answer yes. Most assuredly they were all there. The patriarchs and prophets, and all the Old Testament saints, and all the New Testament saints, all the election of grace, all that shall ever reign with him in glory, and we sometimes even hope that the writer of this

article, though the chief of sinners and the least of saints, was there; for if they were not in him, be it remembered there is no salvation out of him. They were all buried with him by baptism into death; were all crucified with him, and they all arose with him to newness of life. *God hath quickened us together with Christ,* and hath *raised us up together,* and made us sit together.

(l) Very true; but was any part of his posterity out of him when he transgressed? If so, who, or where are they?

(m) If things had not been just as they were, we do not pretend to know how they would have been.

(n) As Adam is the figure of Christ, so Eve, to our view, is the figure of the bride, the Lamb's wife. And there was a union of life between them before her formation or manifestation as his bride. That relation was not annulled by her distinct formation, for she was still the bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and she was called *woman,* because she was taken out of the man, and her name was called Eve because she was the mother of all living, and that too before any of her children were born. Even as Jerusalem, which is above and is free, is the mother of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise. Now Paul says: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." Were we to suppose that when Eve had transgressed, Adam had refused to follow her into the transgression, must they not have been forever separated from each other? But Adam said she was given *to be with him,* and she gave him of the forbidden fruit, and he did eat. Apply the figure to Christ and his church; for Paul says he is speaking of Christ and the church. The church was created in Christ; she is still the bone of his bones; she is his body, his flesh, and his bones. The church in her separate formation was beguiled by the serpent, deceived, betrayed,

and was in the transgression. She had no power to return to Christ, though she was no less his wife - no less the bone of his bones; for the relationship could not be dissolved, but he could go to her. Christ could and did bow his heavens and come down. He was made of a woman, made under the law. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. His Bride was previously given to be with him; for God had said it was not good for man to be alone; so, neither was it good in the sight of God that Christ should be alone. He had power to follow his Bride, by receiving the fruit at her hand, and by having her iniquities laid on him and to forever cancel them. But when Adam had followed Eve into the transgression, there with her he remained; for he had no power to redeem her. So here the figure ends. But Christ had power to lay down his life and to take it again, according to the commandment of his Father, and in his triumphant resurrection quickened his church with resurrection life and immortality.

We submit what we have written to the consideration of brother Pence, and to our readers generally. Long as the article is, we have not allowed ourself a full range of the subject, but hope we may be understood, and that some at least may be edified; and if our readers will forgive us for the tedious length of this, we will try to avoid the infliction of so severe a punishment on them next time.

Middletown, N.Y.
June 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 46-63

REMARKS ON EPHESIANS II. 5.

BROTHER BEEBE: Will you give us your views on Eph. ii. 5. "Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (By grace ye are saved.)" – ISAAC BRISCOE.

IN reply to our brother, we will say, Such as we have, we will give; and certainly nothing more can reasonably be required at our hands. We understand the apostle in this epistle to a Gentile church, and with them, to all the faithful in Christ Jesus, to be laboring to show that all spiritual blessings result to us from the fixed purpose and determinate decrees of God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; and flowing to the heirs of promise in precise accordance with the doctrine of election - According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. And having in the first chapter brought to view the firm, immutable and everlasting basis of our hope for life and salvation, dwells, in the immediate connection of our text, on the quickening power of God, in reference to the execution of his eternal and unfrustrable design in the salvation of his people. In the passage presented for consideration, the saints are spoken of as being quickened together with Christ, and saved by grace. We presume the following considerations are fairly involved in the subject before us, viz:

First. The life which the saints had in Christ before they fell in Adam. That the saints had any personal individual existence other than that which was given them in Christ, we shall not contend; but that they existed as the spiritual body of which Christ is the Head, is as clearly proven in the scriptures, as is the existence of Christ as Head of his body; and that the body of Christ was created in Christ, as that Eve was created in Adam; and that they were chosen in him

before the foundation of the world, and in him were predestinated to all that they were by Jehovah destined to be, either in time or eternity, is fully implied in the first chapter of this epistle. The omniscient eye could, and did see the substance of Christ, lying in embryo; and in his book all his members were written, when as yet there was none of them. Psalms cxxxix. 16. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. John i. 4. Do we inquire, What life was in him, who was with God, and who was God? The apostle answers: "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "When he who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col. iii. 3, 4. In perfect harmony with this sentiment, is the expression of the psalmist. "He that dwelleth in the *secret place* of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psa. xci. 1. The place where God has hidden the life of his people, must be a secret place, and under the shadow or protection of the Almighty; and that such is the place of the saints' security, see Deut. xxxiii. 27. "The Eternal God is thy refuge," &c. And that such has ever been the spiritual habitation of the saints, see Psa. xc. 1, 2. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations – before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world; even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God &c. As we apprehend no danger of these premises being disputed by Old School brethren, for brevity's sake we pass.

Second. The cause and nature of alienation, death, &c. In the preceding part of the chapter from which we have our text, the apostle connects our death with our existence in an earthly Adam, or under the law, as transgressors thereof; dead, he says, in trespasses and sins. He has elsewhere informed us that sin is a transgression of the law; but where there is no law there is no transgression. Hence this death has reference to our law state; and consequently to our relation to an earthly Adam. Now it we were to speak of the

first great cause of all causes, we would say with the psalmist, (xi. 3) "Thou turnest men to destruction, and sayest, Return, ye children of men." Or in the language of the apostle, (Rom. viii. 20) "For the creature was made subject to vanity; not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." But when speaking as to the procuring cause, on the part of man, we conceive that our alienation from God, and total depravity, and death in sins, is attributable to the introduction of sin into the world. In Romans v. 17, the apostle tells us, that by one man's offence, death reigned by one, &c. And again in this epistle, (iv. 18) this apostle attributes our alienation from the life of God, to that ignorance which is, to us, in consequence of our depravity by sin. Hence he very justly denominates it a death in trespasses and sins. The nature of our alienation is properly compared to a state of captivity "All we like sheep have gone astray." Isa. liii. 6, 1 Peter ii. 25. The law under which we were created in Adam required of us perfect and perpetual obedience; and said in a voice of thunder, The soul that sinneth, it shall die. We had all sinned and come short of his glory; hence we fell under the condemning sentence of the law, became lawful captives, were by the law cast into the prison of death, and there held in chains of darkness, without hope, and without God in the world; and, as the apostle here tells us, "That at this time we were without Christ, (or life - for Christ is our life) being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, (Gentiles literally,) and condemned sinners, in the spiritual view of the subject, and strangers to the covenants of promise." The covenants of promise made with Abraham, were figurative of the provisions of grace locked up in the cabinet of the divine mind, for the heirs of salvation; and in our degradation we were utter strangers to that provision, and equally so to – any other way of life and salvation, notwithstanding our captivity, darkness, bondage, guilt and death, we are not to suppose that what was treasured up in Christ for us, had undergone any change;

God is immutable; and Jude assures us that the saints which were sanctified by God the Father, were preserved in Christ Jesus. Jude 1, And Paul has named them as the "reserved ones;" (Rom. xi. 4) and our text, as we propose to show, forbids the notion that God's love towards us could be abated by any thing which we could do. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." - Songs viii. 7. Nor can all the substance of poor, lost, sinful mortals buy it; it is sovereign, discriminating, eternal, immutable, and invincible. Could we admit that in our fall in Adam, we fell out of Christ, or that the vital relationship of his children to him was dissolved, in relation to that life which was given us in him, and secured for us in him before all worlds, we should despair of salvation by him; for the lawful captive must be *lawfully* delivered; and by virtue of the eternal indissoluble union; the right of redemption was vested in Christ; and on this principle he came into the world, and was made under the law, (not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it) to redeem them that were under the law. In this relationship he could, and did as truly represent us, in the obedience which he rendered to the divine law, as Adam had represented us in his first transgression of divine authority; hence, says the apostle, " Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so (or exactly so) by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." - Rom. v. 18, 19.

In the foregoing, we have expressed our views of the life we had in Christ from everlasting, of our fallen state, and alienation in our earthly Adam, our captivity, bondage, &c., and also the way of life through the obedience and death of Christ; but our text says, we are "quickened together with Christ." Apart from him we must have been, had the preexisting bond been severed; and apart from him there

was no way possible for us to be quickened. Our natural head, Adam, was made a *living soul* ; but our spiritual representative was made a *Quickening spirit*. He quickeneth whomsoever he will together with him. How sweet! how heavenly the language! Together with him, we had life before the world began. Together with him, we are in due time quickened and raised from the dead. Together with Christ, are we sons of God, and heirs of immortal glory; and so completely together, or united, that when he died for us all, then were we all dead; dead to the law by the body of Christ; all our accumulated guilt was laid on him; bearing for us all the dreadful curse of the law, billows of divine wrath overwhelming his soul, and baptized him deep in death; but soon the bands of death gave way, soon the auspicious morning dawned, which gave ample demonstration of his complete victory over sin, death and hell, while the radiant flame of his refulgent glory brought life and immortality to light, for all the members of his mystical body. In the resurrection of Christ, the prophecy of Isaiah (xxvi. 19) was fulfilled. "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Having thus in him suffered the vengeance of the law, been crucified together with him, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance (not to a purchased possession) incorruptible, and undefiled, (notwithstanding our fall in Adam) and that fadeth not away; reserved (not newly procured) in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation." - See I Peter i. 3-5. Hence we see in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, the all-sufficiency of his atonement, complete satisfaction rendered to law and divine justice, the prison doors are unbarred, the jubilee trumpet is blown, liberty is proclaimed

to captives, the prisoners are brought up out of their prison houses; and, as he bursts forth from the confines of the tomb, his ransomed church is seen emerging from the dead, while from the old heaven, now dissolving with fervent heat, the shout is heard, "Lift up up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." - Psa. xxiv. 7-9. When God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.-Psa. xlvii. 5. How full of consolation is the contemplation of the union of Christ and the church.

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumph'd o'er his foes,
One when in heav'n he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

Lastly. That this astonishing work was done for us when we were dead in sins, is worthy of special attention. Before we were dead, we needed no such work as quickening, or the resurrection of our blessed Lord for us, as the whole need not a physician. "But God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." - Rom. v. 8, 9. And again, this great work being performed for us when we were dead in sins, shows that it could not possibly rest on any merit, work or will of ours; therefore the apostle adds the words, "By grace ye are saved;" and afterwards declares that it is not of works, lest any man should boast; but that we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should in them.

In conclusion, be it ours to reflect with wonder, joy and gratitude to God, on the revelation of a way of life and salvation so completely adapted to our ruined condition, and so admirably calculated to abase the proud man in the dust

before God. Not unto us, not unto us, O God, but to thy name give all the glory. Amen.

Alexandria, D. C.
Februay 15, 1839.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 482 – 488

Eternal Vital Union

BRETHREN G. BEEBE & SON: – As I have been reading your paper a long time, and have never asked for your views on any particular subject, I will now ask one question; but not to produce controversy. I presume that all sound Baptists believe that it was the relationship Christ bore to his church which was under the law that rendered it necessary for him to be made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Now as eternal, spiritual life could not be under the law, in what did the relation consist? If it was a spiritual relation, how did anything spiritual get under the law? Now if you consider the question unreasonable or out of place, pass it by, and all will be right.

F. ODOM.
Lindale, Texas, May 7, 1879.

REPLY: – When we speak of the eternal, vital union of Christ and his bride, or church, we do not mean that either the bride or Bridegroom existed in the flesh, or under the law, until the members of Christ as the children of God were manifested in their earthly nature. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same." – Heb. ii. 14. The children came under the law by being partakers of flesh and blood, just as their heavenly Bridegroom did.

"In union with the Lamb,
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be."

But that union of Christ and his members which is from everlasting and to everlasting, is a purely spiritual and vital

union, a union of spiritual, eternal life, which is hid with Christ in God; a union of the life of the head and spiritual or mystical body of Christ. The members or children are said to be partakers of flesh and blood; their partaking of flesh and blood made them children of the flesh, which was under the law, but it did not make them children of God, for we are expressly told in the scriptures that "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." – Romans ix. 8. They were children of God in Christ before they were partakers of flesh and blood, and in that flesh and blood they came under the law, which in their fleshly nature they transgressed, and from which they required to be redeemed, that they might receive the adoption of sons, to wit, the redemption of their body. So they came under the law precisely as their Redeemer did, by partaking of flesh and blood; he was made under the law by being made of a woman. His coming in the flesh did not make him the Son of God, for he bore that relation to the eternal Father from everlasting; but he became the Son of man by his incarnation, and as the Son of man he came under the law which he came down from heaven to fulfill, magnify and honor, and from the demands of which he came to redeem those who were chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world. – Eph. i. 3,4. We have never held, as some have seemed to understand, that our earthly nature ever stood in eternal union with Christ, nor that the saints were brought into an experimental union with him until they are personally born of the Spirit; but we have and do understand, that our earthly nature ever stood in eternal union with Christ, nor that the saints were brought into an experimental union with him until they are personally born of the Spirit; but we have and do understand and believe that the incorruptible seed, by which our experimental birth is produced, is a vital seed, that liveth and abideth forever; and that seed as the germ of immortality was hid with Christ in

God eternally, as our natural life was given us and hid in the earthy Adam from the time of his creation until we were born of the flesh, and that it was in this as well as other respects that Adam is the figure of him that was to come.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 8
April 15, 1880

EVANGELIZING THE WORLD.

UNDER this imposing pretension all the wheels of modern speculative philanthropy are put in motion, and all their revolutions are made to tell of the magnitude of the enterprise; every agent employed, from the generator of steam to the little twirling spindle, are made to bubble and buzz with large accounts of unprecedented success attendant on these human contrivances for the reformation of mankind and the overthrow of Satan's kingdom. Magnificent societies encircling the great and wealthy of Europe and America have been employed for years in distributing bibles, tracts, missionaries and heresies throughout the accessible parts of the world, and the numbers of converts have been multiplied at home and abroad to an astonishing amount. The favorite idols of numerous pagans have been renounced and hurled back indignantly to their bats and moles, for the more refined systems of modern invention. The Washingtonians, or professedly reformed drunkards, with the abolitionists, the Millerites and the Mormons are all employed in preparing the world for the exit of time. "Father Matthews" in Europe, and Delavan, the "apostle of temperance" in this country, are doing exploits; and some have whispered that the end of all things will be in April next. Others there are indeed, afternoon sort of people, who think that without an astonishing harvest of pecuniary aid they will not be able to prepare for their anticipated millennium in less than thirty or forty years; but these are willing to avail themselves of all the excitement produced upon the public mind by Mr. Miller's theory, notwithstanding they very generally denounce him as a fanatic.

Many new orders of revivalists have been originated to do the business of evangelizing the world. The Baptists in the south have adopted the camp-meeting plan, and drive on business

with a zeal surpassing that of the Methodists, while their New School brotherhood in the north are making rapid work with tents and protracted meetings.

At present Mr. Miller, Alexander Campbell and Finney the perfectionist are all engaged in the benevolent work of reforming the citizens of New York City. Time and space would fail us to spread out before our readers any adequate idea of the numerous schemes, inventions, machines and appendages now in full operation for the suppression of sin and the annihilation of Satan’s kingdom, and yet we greatly mistake if there has ever been a period in the history of our country when all manner of crime and immorality, heresy and spiritual wickedness in high places flourished to so great an extent. There are reported by our courts of justice, perhaps twice as many murders, suicides, robberies, thefts, duels, perjuries and frauds than at any previous period in the recollection of the most aged of our generation. The numerous cells of the new prison in this county are at this moment literally filled to overflowing with culprits awaiting their trial. Nor is this state of things at all peculiar to this meridian; from every quarter we hear of a similar state of things.

To us it appears very evident that the God who looked down upon the folly and madness of the builders of Babel, and in judgment inflicted on them a confused language, gives too plain an indication of his righteous indignation to be mistaken. How can it be otherwise? God will not be mocked by men who profanely undertake to supercede his method of salvation by the substitution of their own inventions. How arrogant and presumptuous for mortal worms who profess to know the Lord, in whose sight the heavens are not pure, and by whom angels are charged with folly, to presume to improve his plans or to excel his wisdom. Will he not demand of them, “Who hath required this at your hands?” More than

twenty years since the general apostacy of the Baptists have been spent in fruitless experiments to mature a system of salvation by works, and to make converts without the special operation of the Holy Ghost. Thousands of conversions have been reported as the result; but alas! how mortifying to the pride of man to hear the keen reproof of Jesus, “Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up.” All the heresies, delusions, persecutions and religious extravagancies that have ever agitated our guilty world, disturbed the church of God and caused rivers of innocent blood to flow, were introduced under the specious pretence of reforming, christianizing or evangelizing the world and improving the state and condition of the church.

The conspiracy of Jews and Romans, of wicked men and devils against the life and character of the immaculate Savior, against his apostles and the primitive saints was headed by high priests and elders, scribes and Pharisees; and the crucifixion of Christ and the proscription and martyrdom of his disciples was effected under the highest profession of profound regard for the glory of God and the spiritual good of man. The establishment of the professedly christian religion by law, under Constantine, together with the whole train of improvements in religion, the creation of a pope, an inquisition and the lighting up the fires of the papal persecution, were all conceived, undertaken and consummated professedly for the salvation of mankind. No theory can be too heterodox, no practice too corrupt to gain patronage from the multitude if it be but enrobed in the livery of religion. Mahomet succeeded in fastening his delusions on his numerous dupes; Peter, the hermit, in securing the patronage of the crowned heads of Europe, and in enrolling a mighty army to attempt the extermination of infidelity and the substitution of the papal heresy in Palestine; and with the same kind of zeal the Puritans of the east and the Protestants of the south waged their wars of

extermination against the Baptists and all other non-conformists, and persecuted them in some instances even unto death. And now while verging upon the middle of this nineteenth century, with all the boasted light, science, patriotism and religion, and with the full mass of historical testimony pouring its meridian radiance upon us, we see the same spirit, zeal, delusion and excessive fondness of error as an incubus fastened upon the citizens of these United States, and from this country breaking forth like a flood to deluge the more barbarous nations of the earth. And this is called evangelizing the earth; while the laws of Jesus, the doctrine of the gospel and the institutions of the house of God are cast aside as being quite too antiquated and inefficient to be of any further use.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
Dec. 1, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 94 – 97

THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF OUR GOD.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." – Daniel ii. 44.

Brother John R. Martin, of Virginia, having requested our views on the above text, we feel a pleasure in offering for his, and for the consideration of our readers generally, such views as we have upon the subject. Limited, as indeed our views are, we cannot in truth say that we have none, for we have often thought of the text, with the most pleasing admiration and delight. There are many things sealed up in the prophecy of Daniel, which have seemed to our mind more dark and hidden than other portions of the sacred Scriptures. Among other things, the images of beasts, rams, and he-goats, &c., by which it pleased God to indicate the various periods of time, revolutions in the governments, and affairs of the world, from the time of the captivity of Israel in Babylon, to the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. But however dark and obscure, to our feeble understanding, many portions are, this text is presented in connection with so many, and so brilliant evidences of its application, both as to the identity of the kingdom, and the particular period of time in which it should be set up, that we cannot doubt that the kingdom intended is the church of the living God, the ground and pillar of the truth. In the dream of the king of Babylon, according to its interpretation by the prophet of our God, a succession of kingdoms, kings, revolutions and important events, were provided and ordained of God, to fill up the years intervening from the dynasty of Nebuchadnezzar, over

the Caldeans, to that of the Caesars, over the Roman Empire, &c. Whatever obscurity may invest the great image which the king saw, with its head of gold, and his feet of iron and clay, with all its various composition, in portraying the things which they represented, the fact that our Savior was born in Bethlehem, in the days of Caesar Augustus, and that he suffered on the cross, arose from the dead, ascended up into heaven, sent down the Holy Spirit, organized his kingdom, and fulfilled all that was embraced in the prophecy of our subject, in and during the days of the dynasty of the house of the Caesars, is to us sufficient testimony that it was in their days, according to the prediction, that this kingdom which was destined to endure forever, was to be set up. We will pass to notice some very important declarations in regard to the kingdom, its origin, growth, perpetuity, subjects, conquests, and glory.

ITS ORIGIN.

This kingdom is presented under the similitude of a stone cut out of the mountain, without hands. If by the mountain, we understand the mountain of Jehovah’s holiness; and by the stone, Christ, who is the tried and elect precious cornerstone, which God has laid in Zion, it was said by the psalmist. His foundation is in the holy mountain, and from that holy mountain he was never brought forth in manifestation by the hands, wisdom or power of men, for no man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal him. Or, if by his being cut out of the mountain, &c, is intended his descent from Abraham, according to the flesh, though for ages the prayers of the patriarchs and ancient men of God were constantly raised, “O, that the salvation of God were come out of Zion!” None of them ever presumed that they were able to bring him out; and when the fullnes of the time for his advent had come, no ordinary generation could give him birth. A virgin conceived, and the Savior was

born. In him was recognized the embodiment of this kingdom. The crown is on his head, the laws of it are in his hearts; and all the subjects of it were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and he has carried and borne them all the days of old. But more especially we look to the time when he was begotten from the dead, as the first-fruits of them that slept; and here appears the exceeding greatness of the mighty power of God, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. In his resurrection he returned not from the war without the spoils of victory. But in all this there was no show of hands. All was accomplished by the God of heaven, without the aid of men. But, once more, if by the kingdom, we understand its subjects, as the term is sometimes used, then may we look to the rock whence we are hewn, and unto the whole of the pit whence we are digged, and in this application, we shall find that the members of Christ are brought into manifestation, as the Stone was cut out of the mountain without hands. “Look,” says Isaiah, “unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you.” Abraham was stricken with age, and Sarah’s system of means had failed to bring forth anything but a mocking Ishmael; the child of promise could not be born until God’s appointed time had come, and the power of God without the help of men was displayed, then Sarah had a son, according to the promise of God. John saw this kingdom, this heavenly Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband. The whole system of religion means, for the production or for the upbuilding of the kingdom of Christ, at the present day, embracing the whole machinery of modern or ancient missionism, together with all the work-mongrel plans, schemes and financial stock-jobbing operations, is based upon the false supposition that the stone must come out of the mountains by hands, and that the building must go up by power and by might, and not by God’s Spirit, as he has said.

THIS KINGDOM SHALL GROW, OR WAX GREAT.

The prophet Isaiah has testified thus, “For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.” From these, with many other Scriptures, we are taught in what sense the kingdom is to grow. Not in a manner that is to augment the number of God’s elect, or of those whose sins Christ has borne in his own body on the tree, but by their being all gathered together in one, till they all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God: unto a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and the church over which he is the Head, is that fullness. In his elect members his stature is complete; for God has given him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. As the leaven was hid in a definite quantity of meal, (three measures), until all was leavened. But let us not forget that the Stone when it shall have broken in pieces and consumed all other kingdoms, and when it shall fill the whole earth, is precisely the same stone that was cut out of the mountain without hands. The whole kingdom or stone, whether as seen in the grain of mustard seed, or when developed as a spreading tree in whose branches the fowls of the air seek for shelter, is the same which was originally in the mountain. All the increase has not, and will not, carry her beyond the measure of the stature of Christ. Just what this kingdom was,

as chosen and existing in Christ before the world began, it shall be when time shall be no longer.

THE PERPETUITY OF THIS KINGDOM.

In our text it is said of its perpetuity, it shall never be destroyed, and, secondly, it shall stand forever. The same vision shows the decline and ultimate destruction of all earthly kingdoms. The kingdoms of gold, of silver, of brass, iron and clay, shall all be broken in pieces and consumed, but the kingdom of Jesus Christ is an everlasting kingdom, and this dominion hath no end. In this kingdom, God hath set his King upon his holy hill of Zion; and unto his Son he saith, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.” If the elements of dissolution were in its composition, Zion’s sons might tremble; but they are not there. No ravenous beast shall be there, nothing to hurt or destroy shall ever be in this holy mountain. But God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved, God will help her, and that right early. As mountains were round about Jerusalem, so is God around about his people. He is a wall of fire round about, and a glory in the midst, and he has appointed salvation for walls and for bulwarks, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. From the days of Cain to the present hour, she has endured the wrath of earth and hell; but not one of her cords have yet been broken, nor has any one of her stakes been removed. Our God assures us in the text that this kingdom shall never be destroyed. He will not himself destroy it, and no other power can. He has sworn that he will not be wroth with her, nor rebuke her. It shall stand forever, a monument of the power, goodness and faithfulness of her covenant God. Wherefore, says Paul, we receive a kingdom which cannot be moved. How deep are her foundations, how invincible her battlement, and how strong are all her fortifications! No weapon formed against her shall prosper. The eternal God is her refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. He

rideth on the heavens in her help, and in his excellency on the sky. It shall stand forever; but not forever in her militant state, not always in the habiliments of war; the battles of the warrior will soon be over, and the garments rolled in blood, be laid aside; and when the last enemy, which is death, shall be destroyed, this standing kingdom shall be delivered up to God, as full, as pure and as complete as when it was given to the Son, before there were any foundations abounding with water, or ever the earth was. This kingdom was prepared for the saints of God in Christ to inherit, before the foundation of the world, and after earth's old pillars shall have fallen, and her foundation shall be dissolved, still the kingdom of our God, and of his Christ, shall stand forever, and the saints in glory shall confess, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever, Amen."

THE SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM.

They are forever and unchangeably the same. The kingdom shall not be given to other people. None but the sons of God are heirs of glory, and none but the heirs can inherit the kingdom. As the King shall say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before the foundation of the world, others cannot inherit it; for it was prepared by the immutable Jehovah for them. Neither can they inherit a kingdom prepared since the foundation of the world, for the kingdom to which they are heirs, was prepared and given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. All the missionary zeal and strife of will-worshipers to bring in another set of heirs will avail nothing, as God has given the unalterable pledge that it shall not be given to another, but to the same people for whom it was prepared before the foundation of the world. Nor can the positions in the kingdom of the heirs be changed. To sit on my right hand, and on my left hand, are not, says Christ, mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it was

prepared of my Father. Christ, in his mediatorial character, told his disciples that the Father had appointed him a kingdom and he also appointed them in like manner a kingdom; and farther he said to them, “Fear not, little flock, for it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” This is the same kingdom that the stone cut out of the mountain without hands signified; these who are the subjects of it now, were, as they existed in Christ their head, always the subjects of it; and always shall be the subjects of it; for it shall not be given to other people. It is true that many of the subjects of this kingdom have finished their course, and have been called home from the battle-ground to their crowns, and others have been gathered in to fill up the ranks, but not one has been added to the original enrollment or registry; for in God’s book all the members were written, and in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them. Those who have gone home to glory have not left the kingdom; for the subjects shall come from the east and west, and from the south and north, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God. He says to the North, Give up! And to the South, Keep not back; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory.

THE CONQUESTS OF THIS KINGDOM.

The stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands, smote the image upon his feet, and broke in pieces the gold, silver, brass, iron and clay, so the kingdom which the God of heaven has set up was destined to break in pieces all the kingdoms and powers of this world which the image signified, and to triumph over them all. When the Redeemer slew the enmity, and nailed the hand-writing of ordinances to his cross, he abolished the middle wall of partition, which had stood between Jews and Gentiles, and took it out of the way.

Then did this stone smite the image upon its feet of iron and clay, and break in pieces all the kingdoms of this world. Then did our Redeemer receive the heathen, or Gentiles, for his possession, and the utmost parts of the earth for his inheritance, to rule them with a rod of iron, and to break them in pieces, like a potter's vessel. Under and throughout the whole gospel dispensation, as we understand the subject, this stone fills the whole earth; and the dominion of that King whom God has set upon his holy hill Zion is from the rivers to the ends of the earth, and he has power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. Before him now all nations are assembled, and he is, and for the last eighteen hundred years has been, separating them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and calling all the blessed of his Father into his kingdom, to sit down with the patriarchs, and to go no more out forever. The kingdoms and kindreds of the earth are broken in pieces, and are being broken, when he takes one of a city, and two of a family; when he sets the father against the son, the mother against the daughter, and the mother-in-law against the daughter-in-law. When a potter's vessel is broken to "shivers," it is beyond the ingenuity of man to unite the particles again. Even so when God calls his people out of darkness into light, and brings them to his holy hill, nothing can effectually resist his power, or annul his word. But the triumph of the kingdom of our God, as we have hinted, also contemplates the utter subjection of all things to Christ the King. Unto him it is said, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. All things must be subdued, and all the subjects of this spiritual kingdom shall be more than conquerors through him that has loved them: Therefore speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished. Christ has triumphed over hell and death. The kingdoms of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay, crumble and fall to pieces before him. His dominion is to the ends of the earth. He hath all power over all flesh, and the

kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of our God, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever.

The last general proposition in regard to this kingdom which we were to notice is its superlative glory. The superior glory of the kingdom is expressed in the inspired record; it is called the kingdom of heaven, of God, of Christ, &c., and in a different sense from that in which the providential government of Jehovah is administered over all the kingdoms and events of the world, for in distinction from the general government of God in providence over all the powers of earth, this kingdom is called the kingdom of heaven, and in contrast with the kingdoms of men. This is of heaven; all others are of the earth. This is the kingdom of light; all others are of darkness. This is from everlasting to everlasting; all others of time, and destined to decay and pass away like a vapor. This is a spiritual and incorruptible, all others are carnal, earthly, corruptible, perishable. The kingdom of Christ is founded in the boundless wisdom and amazing grace of God; all others upon the wisdom and ambition of men. The kingdom of Christ is invincible, and shall stand forever; all others shall be broken to pieces, like a potter’s vessel. But the peculiar glory of this above all other kingdoms more fully appears from the consideration that our God and Savior Jesus Christ is the presiding King, Ruler, Head and Proprietor of it. While all the glory of the invincible God shines in his face, he is himself the light of it. No sun, no moon, no stars, no lights of nature or of art can possibly add to the radiant blaze of that refulgence which beams from his divine countenance upon all the subjects of this spiritual dominion. His kingdom requires no allied powers, no earthly marshalled troops, no human fortifications, for the safety of its King or subjects. God is himself, in all his might and omnipotence, its strength and its security, and therefore this kingdom cannot be moved, destroyed or given to another people. Except a man be born again he cannot see it. Except

a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into it. May God grant unto us a comfortable and reliable evidence that this kingdom is prepared for us, and that it is our heavenly Father’s good pleasure that we shall inherit it. May we as loyal subjects obey our heavenly King, and speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power.

Middletown, N.Y.
Jan. 15, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 156 - 163

EXODUS 13:17,18

“And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; but God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt: But God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red sea: and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.”

When God delivered the Hebrews from the house of bondage and broke the Egyptian yoke of their captivity, his wisdom as well as power was most strikingly displayed. Such is the unlimited power of God that he could have released his people from bondage by the waving of his hand, or the utterance of a word; he could have instantly crushed the power of Egypt, and stripped the imperial throne of Pharaoh of all its regal strength, or he could have softened the heart of Pharaoh as easily as he could harden it: but his wisdom, as well as his omnipotence was to be demonstrated before the world. And having humbled Pharaoh and effected the release of the Israelites, he was able to conduct them in what way he pleased to their final destiny in the promised land. Having all power and all wisdom he was abundantly able to execute his design in any way that seemed good in his eyes. But in the redemption of Israel from the house of bondage, and their conduct through the wilderness, and their ultimate possession of the promised inheritance, God evidently designed to show forth the redemption of his chosen people from the bondage of the law and their ultimate entrance into the glorious liberty of the gospel. He therefore chose to lead them about. Instead of selecting the shortest route, or that in which the least impediments to their journeyings would require to be encountered, it was his pleasure, for a purpose worthy of himself, to lead them about in a circuitous and

meandering course, which would constantly require the display of his power and wisdom, his cloud by day and his fire by night, to guide and protect them, and to show their entire dependence on him in every step of the way. Thus setting forth in the figure, first, that the salvation of his chosen people was in a way by him ordained, and their redemption from the curse, the bondage and dominion of the law, from the guilt, pollution and consequences of sin, and from the powers of death and hell, was altogether above the wisdom and power of men, and in a way in all respects baffling the wisdom and humbling the pride of the sons of men; showing that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Second, agreeing with the experience of all the saints, every saint can witness with the inspired psalmist that when God broke their yoke of bondage and released them, in a spiritual sense, from the grasp of Pharaoh, and set them free from their bondage; when he took them up out of the horrible pit and miry clay, and put a new song in their mouth, and set their feet upon a rock, that he also established their goings. Had he allowed us to choose our own way, perhaps we would have desired to be conveyed by the nearest way, and on flowery beds of ease, immediately to the mansion of glory. Perhaps all the saints have struggled more or less against the way the Lord has been pleased to lead us about, especially when he has led us by the hand of Moses by the way of the Red Sea, hemmed in on every side, the sea before us, the enemy in hot pursuit behind, and towering mountains at the right and left. We, too, have murmured when led to the bitter waters of Meribah, and we were terribly afraid when he led us near to the mountain that might be touched only on pain of being thrust through with a dart, or destroyed. Like the Hebrews, we have feared that we were brought thus far to be destroyed, but still God has led us in a way which we knew not, and in paths we had not known. Truly he has found us in a waste howling wilderness, like

Jacob, and he has led us about and instructed us, and yet he has kept us as the apple of his eye.

"God led them [the Hebrews] not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although it was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt." The Philistines were a people with whom Israel was never on good terms of friendship, they were enemies, and always on the alert to draw them into difficulty, and bore about the same relation to Israel that the Arminians do to the church and people of God; and although, according to the natural geography of that country, a straight line from Egypt to Canaan would cross the land or territory of the Philistines, it was not the pleasure of the Lord to lead them that way, as it was a way of temptation too strong for the resistance and fidelity of the Hebrews, therefore to avoid the influence of the Philistines on the Israelites which God foresaw would have a tendency to ensnare them, and to bring them again into bondage, he led them by another way. How happy for the children of God is the lesson here taught, that God has established the goings of his redeemed people, and that he knows exactly what amount of temptations his grace shall enable us to bear, and orders our course accordingly. So it is said of the saints, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (I Corr. 10:13) God provides against all *peradventures,* chances or uncertainties, in all the provisions which he has made for the deliverance and salvation of his people. This form of expression cannot imply that there are peradventures or uncertainties with God, but that he has provided infallibly against them. He knew, as he only could know, what would have been the consequences if he had led them through the land of the Philistines: they must have seen war, and they

would probably have been tempted to repent that they had left Egypt, and inclined to return thither. So in the way of life and salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, God has ordained that none can come to him but by Christ, who is the way; there is salvation in no other way. Men cannot be justified in God's sight by any works of righteousness which they have performed, by any obedience to the law which they have or can render. When they are delivered from bondage and the yoke of their captivity is broken, the saints frequently show an inclination to lay their course through the land of the Philistines, that is, they have in them a natural inclination, after having received the Spirit, to be made perfect by the works of the flesh. The Arminian conditional system presents to their inexperienced eyes a smoother path, a shorter distance, and there are many allurements to draw them into the popular thoroughfares of the legal system, but God by his Spirit never leads his people in that way. Paul said to the Galatians, "This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you." If for any purpose God suffers his children to become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and to sojourn in the land of the Philistines, they always see war; for as certainly as the Spirit of truth is in them, they will find a principle of opposition to the corrupt principles and works of the flesh, and all the hosts of the Philistines will oppose the law of the Spirit of life which they possess, and all the powers of their flesh will adhere to the legal tendencies of the Philistine or Arminian doctrines, and, as the poet has very justly remarked, they

"Strive with a Do this and live,
To drive them to Egypt again."

"But God led the people about." He leads them, it is not his method to drive them. When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they hear his voice, and they follow him, but a stranger they will not follow, for they know

not the voice of strangers. As God led the Israelites from Egypt, and through the wilderness, going before them in the cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, so he goes before his spiritual Israel, by day and by night. Instead of scaring or lashing them along, after the Philistine or Arminian fashion, uncapping hell, and showing them the horrors of the damned, to urge them on, he goeth before, and causes them to behold in him such irresistible attraction that they feel sweetly constrained to follow where he leads. He gives them such confidence in his wisdom to lead them, that they desire no other leader, and their experience enables them to say, He leadeth me into green pastures, beside the still waters. But he leads them by the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea, not because that way is the nearest, or smoothest, or most flowery, but because in that way he will be glorified, and his people shall be taught many important lessons which they could not so well learn in any other way. What important lessons did he give them in the wilderness and at the Red Sea? How was his mighty power and discriminating grace displayed, when he made a path for them through the Red Sea, on dry ground, and when the same miracle by which their deliverance was accomplished, destroyed all their enemies? As he led the Hebrews, so he leads his spiritual people, often into wilderness trials, where the beasts of the forest prowl, and where their howlings sometimes alarm them, and to the sea where their way seems, to all human sight, cut off, the enemy advances, and they are hemmed in, and they think there is but a step between them and death, but how seasonably his help comes; his rod is extended, the sea divides, the way of escape is opened, and a song of deliverance breaks forth from their joyful tongues.

“The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt.” Not in the panoply of military warfare, for God himself fought their battles, and gave them victory. The manner of their harness is described in chapter 12:11, “And

thus shall ye eat it [the passover]; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste; it is the Lord's passover." In this manner of harness they ate the passover, and immediately left the land of Egypt, and their harness did not become old, or require to be repaired or replaced during the forty years of their pilgrimage in the wilderness. Here again we have a vivid figure of the way in which the Lord strips his people for the race, and in which he harnesses them for the christian warfare. They are not clad in the armor of men, in coats of mail, nor armed with implements of carnal warfare, for they are not to fight against flesh and blood; the warfare is a spiritual warfare, and their weapons are spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. They are well harnessed at the outset, for they have on the whole armor of God, having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith they shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked; and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. (Eph. 6:13-17) As the Israelites went up out of Egypt harnessed, and wore the same harness all the way in which the Lord their God did lead them until they had accomplished their whole journey and entered the promised land, so the redeemed family of God whom he has redeemed from sin, death and hell are called to be marshalled under the banner of the great Captain of their salvation, and all their armor is of God, their weapons are spiritual and mighty through grace, and they cannot decay or wax old, nor will they ever require to be superseded by any newly invented armor. As the Hebrews went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt, we may rest assured that not one of all the sons of Adam shall ever go up out of the land of Egypt, or be delivered from the house of bondage, in any other harness, nor without this harness. True, men may make profession of

religion, they may display much zeal and courage, they may impose on the saints, but until God breaks their yoke, and puts on them the harness, they have no discharge from bondage, and can never know experimentally the glorious liberty of the sons of God; they are all Ishmaelites, and under the covenant that gendereth unto bondage.

Middletown, N.Y.,
March 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 147 - 153

EXODUS XX. 2.

"BROTHER BEEBE: Please give your views, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on Exodus xx. 25: "And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it."

ALL the institutions for the religious service of Israel under the old dispensation presented a shadow of things to come, the substance or body of which is Christ, and the altar was among the provisions under the law for the sacrificial service of the children of Israel, and in which they were to be distinguished from all other nations and people. Nothing was valid in their religious exercises which God had not him self appointed; and every attempt on the part of Israel to improve upon what God had authorized, was regarded as a pollution. The altars of Israel, in general, seemed typically to allude to the great sacrifice which should be offered up for the sins of the spiritual Israel of our God; but there were other things also to be set forth by the patterns of the things in heaven, as is evident; for although there now remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, since Christ was offered up, yet we find there are sacrifices, figuratively so called, to be perpetuated in the gospel church by those whom our Lord has made kings and priests unto God, and destined to reign on the earth. The precise figurative import of the altar alluded to in the text under consideration, is not altogether clear in our mind; but the manner of building, and the materials of which this altar is to be composed, seems to agree with the gospel order of building up the church. The apostle says, (Heb. xiii. 10) "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Peter, in his first epistle, ii. 15, says to the saints, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to

offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ;" and in verse ninth, "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," &c. As priests unto God, we certainly are not to offer sacrifices in atonement for sin, as there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, since Christ by one offering has perfected for ever them that are sanctified or set apart unto salvation. – Heb. x. 14. But the scriptures speak of spiritual sacrifices, anti-typical of those carnal sacrifices which were offered under the old covenant, and upon Jewish altars. But the text under consideration forbids that the stones for the altar should be hewn. No improvement is to be made on what God has instituted. The materials for building up a church are not to be fitted for stations in a gospel church by human instruments or tools: like the temple, the church must come together without the sound of tools – without the polishing touch of human art or enterprise. No *front* bench tinkering, no protracted meeting efforts, no moral suasion exploits, no missionary, tract, Sunday School or other humanly devised instruments are to touch the work of building up the kingdom of God. The sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty must come in as the men, women and animals came into Noah's ark, just as God by his Holy Spirit shall teach, guide and direct them.

Again, the effect of lifting up human tools upon the lively stones of which the church is built up, has been sensibly felt in many places where we had hoped the Lord had graciously recorded his name; for instance, a young brother manifests a disposition to preach the gospel, he is thought by the sagacious to have rather a rough appearance, he is unlearned, his manners and language too rude for the polished age in which he must figure, yet he is a good brother, very zealous, and – and what? With a little hewing, and squaring, and polishing in one of our theological seminaries, he would be better qualified to do credit to the altar. With such and similar reasonings, modern religionists,

like Israel of old, have provoked the Lord, and sacrificed in gardens, and burned incense on altars of brick, or hewn stone, or in some way in which their own handiwork is used to set off and improve upon the Lord's work and the Lord's appointments.

Not only in convert or proselyte making do we see human instruments employed but also in regard to all institutions connected with the order of the church. Baptism administered in apostolical simplicity, has become too vulgar for the refined taste of many who claim to be Baptists at this day. They are shocked at the idea of men, and especially delicate females, going down into the river to be immersed in the presence of the gazing multitude, and they are tired of the scandal and reproaches which have been heaped on the Baptists by their anti-Baptist neighbors, and finally they have set their wits at work to hew down the institution, and throw off the offences of the cross; and in this work they have succeeded admirably, so that the Rantizers, of Roman Catholic emanation, have even laid aside their quart basins, and come over to immerse their converts in the splendid cisterns fixed in the basements of Baptist meeting houses, where an apparatus is ingeniously contrived to warm the water in the tub, so as riot to chill the zeal of their candidates.

The Lord's Supper has also been hewn down; in many instances the wine is omitted, and water, or water in which dried raisins have been soaked, is substituted.

The laws for the government of the members of the church have not escaped the human appliances for modification. The New Testament is not sufficiently clear and explicit to answer as an only rule for the faith and practice of the saints, without some of the ingenuity of human invention.

In short, there is nothing connected with the faith or practice of the church of Christ, that is suffered to remain precisely as Christ has given authority; some improvement has been attempted, arid all such improvements are regarded as a pollution of the altar of the Lord. Let us then be admonished to adhere strictly to the law and the testimony, and turn not aside to the right hand or the left.

Brother Livesay and all others are welcome to our views, such as they are, and any brother who can give a more scriptural comment on the subject, will be greeted by us with a hearty welcome.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
February 1, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 618 – 621

Experience of the Late Elder Gilbert Beebe.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief (I Timothy 1. 15)."

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words, viz. He was (like all the race of which he is a member) conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a religionist from his birth, yet an enemy to God and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life (for he was alive before the commandment came). He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the "Westminster Catechism", and, in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counter-balancing all the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship, but on all occasions when he had paid his vows he had peace offerings at home. Up to about this period of his life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord he was summoned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice and give the reason (if any he had) why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas, his stronghold failed him

in this very critical moment, he felt that he was ruined, but like Edom, he said, I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places. Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be trifled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in an horrible pit and in miry clay; these exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat from this awful, wretched state, but whither could he flee? If on the wings of the morning he flew to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open. At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frighted soul, hell yawned before him, justice stood with uplifted arm, and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard and brandished over his guilty head; the books were brought, the arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast, tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction? Or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some "Universalist" that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had hold of him? As well might he be told when writhing on a bed of embers that there was no heat in fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken, the Spirit had moved upon the face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form,

and void, yet God had said, Let there be light, and light broke in upon him, and in this light that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, etc., the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus when in or about his eleventh year he went to a distant barn, under an impression like that expressed by the poet:

"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away I know
I must forever die."

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what passed while sleeping, he woke himself singing these words:

"How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing
His dreadful majesty?"

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and sin was gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

"His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sang surprising grace."

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December, 1811, he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in baptism, in the river Thames, in the

city of Norwich, Conn., by Elder John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep. After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist Church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that defender of the truth, Elder Jonathan Van Velsen, who also has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church, in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit; let it suffice to say that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally a Predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such ability as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel's school, and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striving against sin; he finds by every day's experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is evil as ever it was. To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good he finds not. He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

New Vernon, N.Y.
April 30, 1834.

[The above article was first republished in 1865 by request of Elder Beebe's daughters.]

The Remnant
January-February 1994
Volume 8, No. 1

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION.

THERE are many kinds of religion in the world. The apostle Paul speaks of having been brought up after the manner of the Jews' religion; and the Jews' religion, although it acknowledges a God, and the authenticity of the scriptures of the Old Testament, differed as widely from the christian religion as enjoyed by the regenerated sous of God, as spiritual worship differs from carnal ordinances. The religion of the Jews could never fit its possessors for the enjoyment of spiritual things here, nor for the songs of the redeemed in the ultimate state of their glory.

The Pagans, also, were a religious people; extremely devotional and zealous, but knew not the author of their existence as God. They worshiped and still do worship a variety of gods. Mahometans are religious, and their alcoran is by them regarded as an infallible and sacred oracle. Catholics and Protestants of numerous sects claim to be christians, profess the christian religion, and some of them are remarkably zealous in making converts to their religion; compassing sea and land, employing thousands of agents, and expending millions of money in spreading their religion; but all these are essentially different from the primitive disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. And although the Catholics and the Protestants will not like to be classed with Jews, Pagans, and Mahometans, a careful investigation of their several claims will show them to be equally distant from the kingdom of Christ. The religion of the Jews was taught as a science; the religion of the Pagans was taught as a science; the religion of Mahomet was taught as a science; so is that of the Catholics and Protestants, as also the preparation of their priests and ministers, together with the religious instruction of their children. All are ready on every occasion when opportunity serves them to establish their religion by law,

and to enforce it with the edge of the sword. The regenerating power of the Holy Ghost is by none of them considered an indispensible prerequisite to their religion. Jews, Pagans and Mahometans pretend to no such qualification; Catholics and Protestants profess to believe regeneration to be necessary, but hold it to be a work which can be performed through the instrumentality of men and means. The Pope is considered competent to forgive sins, and the Episcopalian priest or bishop to absolve and confirm sinners Pædo-Baptists generally, as well as Campbellites, hold what they administer for baptism to be equivalent to regeneration, or a rite by which unregenerated children are put into the covenant of grace; that all who are in the covenant are saved, and all out of it are lost. Arminian Baptists, or more properly, baptized Arminians, differ in no very essential points from their Protestant and Catholic brethren, except in name and spirit of competition. Like all other false religionists, they can teach their religion as a science, and make converts by the power of what they call moral suasion; the same kind of instruments used by the others in the propagation of their religion is also used by them. And all, Jew, Pagan, Mahometan, Catholic, Protestant, and Baptized Arminian, hate and despise, and dispute the doctrine of salvation by sovereign discriminating grace alone.

All false religion must agree in the particulars noticed above, for if regeneration were a prerequisite to a knowledge of false religion, as it is to a knowledge of experimental religion, false religion could not be propagated, for the Holy Spirit will not qualify men for the reception or practice of false religion. But experimental religion cannot be taught or learned as the sciences, or as every description of false religion can. “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are not foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

The religion of Jesus is not a science; but purely a revelation. Flesh and blood did not reveal it to Peter. Paul knew nothing of it but by revelation. “When it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.” God has hidden these things effectually from the wise and Prudent, and revealed them unto babes. It is indeed a distinguishing provision for the New Testament saints that they shall no more teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother to know the Lord. The knowledge of the Lord is eternal life. “For this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” Men may with quite as much propriety undertake to give eternal life to dead sinners, as to give them a knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ; for the one is equivalent to the other.

But experimental religion is not only radically dissimilar to all other kinds of religion, but there is also a wide difference between the practice dictated by pure religion, and the experience of that pure religion. Men may. have the form of godliness while they know not the experience of its vital power in their hearts; but no man can possess the experience of godliness in his heart without its producing an effect upon his deportment. The difference between true and false religion is known by their respective fruits. Those who possess the experimental power of religion in their hearts, work from life already possessed, while all others work in anticipation of life expected. Such as are born of God, desire and pray that they may be reconciled to God; all others desire and pray that God may be reconciled to them. God’s people are exercised by faith; all others profess to exercise faith. Experimental christians love God, love his truth, love his service, and desire with their whole hearts to live in obedience to all the precepts of their spiritual King; but

others some times have been heard to say, if they believed that their eternal destiny was unalterably settled in the purpose and decree of God, they would take a fill of sin.

On the whole, a religious education, a constrained, or even voluntary form of godliness may exist where there is no vital relationship to God; where the power and experience of the religion of God is unknown; and what an awful state must that be, where the firm of godliness is possessed and the power thereof is denied.

Before we close these remarks, we will observe for the encouragement of some of the trembling lambs of the Redeemer’s flock, that the experience of vital religion in the heart is not always attended with an unfaltering and clear evidence that such is the case. We have thought there are no people on earth so exceedingly jealous of the evidences of their own personal interest in the religion of Jesus, as the children of God are. The reason is obvious; they both see and feel the corruptions of their own natures. Grace has made them sensitive; and that which would occasion no pain to a hypocrite is felt and mourned by an heir of heaven. None can know the experience of vital religion, who do not feel the opposing corruptions of their fleshly nature.

This number of the SIGNS may reach the eye of some one of those tried, afflicted, tempted, doubting, and tempest-tossed children of God, who feels almost ready to conclude all former exercises are but delusion. Such a tried, sighing soul may reason thus : If a child of God, why so dull, so stupid, so barren and unfruitful? Why so tempted, perplexed, and doubtful? Or why so little of the spirit of grace and of supplication? Why hungering and thirsting for righteousness, never able to see myself as I would wish to be? Poor soul, all this is christian experience. No christian escapes these trials of their faith. No graceless hypocrite ever experienced these

trials. Therefore, “Count it not strange, as though some strange thing had happened unto you.” The trial of our faith is more precious than the trial of gold which perisheth. Therefore count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, for

“Your God shall make the tempter flee,
For as thy days thy strength shall be.”

New Vernon, N.Y.,
November 1, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 595 – 599

ETERNAL PROMISES OF IMMORTAL GLORY OFFERED BY THE VIRGINIA TRACT SOCIETY AS SECURITY FOR MONEY.

THE following proclamation is published in the twenty-ninth number of the *Religious Herald*, (a New School Baptist paper, published at Richmond, Virginia.) How true are the words of divine inspiration that "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." The time has been within our recollection when even the advocates for Tract societies would have been shocked with such open profanity of the name and eternal things of God, as now they unblushingly spread before their infatuated partizans, with an effrontery beggaring all attempts at description. Who is there that can remember what the Baptist church in the United States was thirty years ago, could have expected to live long enough to read in a reputed Baptist paper, heaven offered on mortgage for a loan of three thousand dollars! But with the growing corruptions of the man of sin, that day has overtaken us. The greedy dogs of whom Isaiah prophesied, have exhausted all the schemes and tricks common among gamblers and swindlers, and now defy the bolts of heaven by offering to barter the promises of God, the interests of heaven and the veracity of God for money.

When Monroe Edwards was convicted of selling the promises of banks which he had forged, he was sentenced to suffer the demerit of his crimes in the state prison; but the agent of the Tract society offers to pledge for money promises of immortal glory, purporting to be eternal promises of God, but promises which God has never made. We demand of Mr. Crane, or the editor of the *Herald*, testimony that God has ever made

promises that he would pledge immortal glory to those who would contribute towards raising three thousand dollars for the Virginia Tract society! If they will prove by the scriptures that God requires that amount of money, (we ask for no pledge) every dollar that we can command shall be cheerfully applied to make up the Sum. But if they fail to show such authority we hold them guilty of forgery, swindling and blasphemy.

We send two copies of this number to the *Herald*, and desire Mr. Sands to forward one of them to the presumptuous man who wrote the article below.

"THREE THOUSAND DOLLARS WANTED BY THE FIRST OF OCTOBER. THE VERY BEST SECURITY GIVEN.

"The Virginia Tract Society wants the above amount in order to carry on its operations. Twelve hundred dollars are indispensably necessary to pay off its debts incurred in for warding publications to all parts of the State – one thousand dollars to pay four colporteurs to visit those portions of the State not suppled with our books; one of them to be commissioned for the German population – eight hundred dollars (or eight thousand dollars, as chrìstians may say) to be applied to the publication of books or tracts in foreign lands. Let each brother or sister who reads this, ask him or herself *how much he or she can lend the Lord, on the security of his eternal promises of immortal glory* [*!!*] and for the interest bestowed on the constant dew of divine grace. Come, fellow-christian, do not put it off till next week or next fall. Open your pocket book, take out five, ten, twenty, or fifty dollars, if you please, and forward at once to *George Steel*, Treasurer, and say whether you want it deposited in the Home or Foreign bank. We are in solemn earnest. The money must come from some quarter to rid us of embarrassment, and certainly one hundred christians can be

found, who will give twenty dollars immediately, and two hundred who will give ten dollars, and one thousand who can give five dollars. What a handsome sum that would make for the Virginia Tract Society? I can fancy it already before me. Instead of three thousand dollars there would be nine thousand dollars. Do not wait, brethren, for a visit from the agent. Send immediately. Remember, as a Presbyterian elder once said to me, that the only real savings you will value in the hour of death or at the judgment seat will be those deposited in the gospel bank.

W. CAREY CRANE,
General Agent Virginia Tract Society.
RICHMOND, Va., July 14, 1843.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
July 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 296 – 298

EXTRACT FROM H. GEAR'S SERMON.

"THOSE who engage in the missionary enterprise, on gospel principles, are most intimately conjoined and associated therein with the adorable Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

"We have been sending our thoughts forward to contemplate the final results of the missionary labors. We will now turn them back to consider their origin and the authority on which they are based. Far away back, then, in the annals of eternity, to the record of a council held on this subject by the illustrious Three in One. High consultation was had on man's for ever lost condition, and the resolve was made to undertake his redemption. The plan was that the Father should send the Son to the revolted province as Minister and Missionary Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, attended and aided in various ways by the Holy Spirit, and also by angelic messengers. And thus it was that when the Son in the fulfillment of his plan appeared on earth, in order to remove all doubts and satisfy even the most scrupulous of his authority as Messiah, he produced citation from the book of these ancient records, saying, "Lo I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God." His will lie did do for three and thirty years; he trod the realms of the rebellious, seeking in ways manifold to do them good; he then entered and trod the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God; he trod it alone, and. of the people there were none with him. But that is the only place where he could be alone; in every other department of labor he would have his people with him. And especially does lie call upon them in the work of instruction, in the spread and proclamation of the gospel for the purpose of enlightening and winning souls to the love and practice of

holiness. here in the language of Paul we are laborers together with God. O, what honored and favored partnership! what! to be associated not with the King simply, but with the King of kings and Lord of lords! is not this grand? is there not moral dignity here? And what in the universe can express the value and glory of an enterprise, if the concentration of infinite wisdom and goodness upon it, and the earnest, protracted and unceasing engagement of the adorable Trinity in it, cannot? And is it not cheering, is it not inspiring to know that while you are endeavoring to draw souls to Christ your work is identical with that of the Almighty Father? "That while you are agonizing in spirit for the salvation of the lost, and seeking with all your heart to save them, you are sympathizing deeply with the blessed Redeemer, and hi-boring in happy union with him in the same glorious object?" That in endeavoring to convince men of a sin and lead them in the paths of holiness, you are acting in delightful conjunction with the ever blessed spirit of truth? Let us, my brethren, be careful to demean ourselves worthily, and act in a manner becoming those who have been called with such a high and holy calling. We now close with some inferences.

"1. *How great and yet how delightful is the work of the ministry, especially that of the missionary.* They toil for objects that awaken the interests and engage the affections of angelic beings. in it they have their sympathy and approving smile. The object of their labors, moreover, is confessedly the most sublime and most important in creation. They seek the rescue of deathless spirits from untold misery; they seek the enrichment and adornment and perfection of those spirits in the bliss and beauties of undecaying holiness. To be successful in this is to live to some good purpose, to be indeed a benefactor of the race.

"2. *How careful should we be in the selection of persons to fill the ministerial and missionary offices.* We speak not here,

particularly, of their abilities or their learning. In both, these respects they should be respectable; but of their character as christians. It is in the formation of character that their business emphatically lies. How then, if they be sordid, sensual, covetous, gross and selfish in their own characters, can they perceive and appreciate the importance of opposite traits in others? Or how, if they do, can they thus stained and tainted, effect the grand object of their calling? Congruity of character and work are here especially demanded, for we are to be examples to the flesh; by these we teach most effectually.

"3. *We see the wickedness of opposition to missions.* It is to rob the holiest and the kindest beings of the universe of one of the richest sources of their enjoyment. It is to stand in the way and hinder the progress of redemption, to keep mankind in sin and ruin, to shut them out from the means of attaining to the end of their creation a character formed upon the model of Immanuel's, to stand in hostile array against the most delightful work of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Who that considers this would wish to occupy such a position? who would bear such a load of guilt? See then that ye oppose not the work of the joyful missions.

"4. *We learn the great desire and anxiety of God that sinners should repent.* Not only has he provided ample means for their salvation, and invited them in the most cordial manner to turn and live, but he has set forth bands of bright celestial beings to charm them to repentance by the music of their harps and the rapture of their songs. Say not then, oh sinner, that thou art willing to turn but Christ is not willing to receive thee. Thy heart deceives thee; trust it not. All heaven waits to receive-the penitent soul." – *Cross and Journal.*

We cannot afford space to present our readers with the entire sermon, but refer them to the *Cross and Journal* of

Columbus, Ohio, for the balance. What we have copied from that New School Baptist paper is a fair specimen of the whole; and from the fact that this sermon was published by special request of the trustees of the Ohio Baptist Convention, is a sufficient evidence that this discourse breathes the sentiments of that convention, and is by them regarded as a masterly exhibition of their real sentiments, and that they consider the doctrines and arguments in it embraced altogether unanswerable by those who are so wicked as to oppose them in their pious enterprise of what they blasphemously call a conjunction and association with the adorable Trinity!

The speaker, in the loftiness of his vain imagination, supposes that at a date at some time far back in the annals of eternity, there was a convention held in which the Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost convened in council upon the subject of undertaking the work of man's redemption.

The stupidity and blindness of this learned novice appears, first, in his profound ignorance of the character and unity of God, supposing that a council or convention of the persons in the Godhead was required in order to hold high consultation, &c.

The ignorance of Mr. Gear and that of the convention before whom he uttered his aspersions upon the character of God, is very obviously betrayed in confounding the two scriptural words counsel and council, of which the latter is in no instance in the scriptures applied to God. The difference in the signification of these words will readily appear by reference to any common dictionary. The term *counsel* is frequently used in the scriptures and applied to God, as Isaiah xlvi. 11, Psa. xxxiii. 11, lxxiii. 24, cvii. 11, and Eph. i. 11, as signifying the decision of the divine mind in relation to future events; but the term *council,* which implies a

deliberative assembly or convention, although frequently applied to anti-christ in the New Testament, is in no instance applied to God. The impropriety of such an application appears, first, in representing the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as a convention or assembly of gods, so distinct from each other as to require a special convention for business. How does this heathenish notion comport with the scriptural testimony: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." – Deut. vi. 4. "A just God and a Savior, there is none beside me." And, "For I am God, and there is none else." – Isa. Xiv. 21, 22? How does it accord with the declaration of Christ, "I and my Father are one," and, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also?" We hear much said about a council of Father, Son and Holy Ghost upon the subject of man's redemption; but upon what portion of divine revelation is it based? There is not a solitary passage in scripture where such a council is mentioned, or where there' is a hint given to that effect. If it could once be proven that such a council was held in the manner contended for, and for the purpose before stated, it would for ever remove the eternal permanency of our hope; it would effectually remove the foundation of the righteous, inasmuch as it would prove that the purpose of redemption did not always exist. Our author says high consultation was held on the subject, which only resulted in an undertaking of the work of man's redemption. To our mind the idea of a commenced purpose of grace is equal to no prior purpose at all. If there be anything *new* in the divine mind it must seriously effect his immutability. If he has changed his mind or purpose by reason of a high or low consultation or issue of a convention, then of necessity that change, even in the divine mind, must be for the better or the worse. If for the better, he was not absolutely perfect prior to the change; and it' for the worse, he is not perfect subsequently to the change! What think ye of this doctrine?

But the writer of our extract evidently designed, by going far back to the annals of eternity, to impress his hearers and readers with the fallacious idea that he is a predestinarian, that he believes in eternal purpose, &c. But does he so believe? By no means. He believes that even the plan or purpose did not exist until the convention of a council, and then a resolution was passed, whether unanimously or only by a majority we are not told, but that a resolution was passed to try the experiment, or in his own words, to undertake the work of man's redemption!

Mr. Gear's description of the plan resulting from the high consultation of an assemblage of persons in the Godhead, is scarcely less extravagant or absurd than his notion of the being and attributes of God; and all combine to prove him a most consummate arminian. He evidently inculcates the idea that the existence of the human family and their fallen, ruined and helpless state were all known by the members of the council before the convention was assembled; but represents them entirely ignorant of the purpose of grace until a much later date, until the result of the high consultation was ascertained. And yet if we should assert that H. Gear believes that God had ordained that sin should be in this world, so as to make it positively certain before the world was made, and even before the plan of grace was adopted, away back in the annals of eternity, we might be in danger of being contradicted.

His supposed plan described as being embraced in the resolution of the council, certainly demands some attention as we pass.

"The plan was that the Father should send the Son to the revolted province, as Minister and Missionary Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, attended and aided in various ways by the Holy Spirit, and also by angelic messengers."

In what part of divine revelation does this sapient sermonizer find testimony to this effect? Not a syllable of the kind can be established by the testimony of the scriptures. We are informed that "When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son," not as a minister and missionary extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the revolted province. He came not in any such characters, nor was his business to treat with another government distinct from the government of God. Ministers plenipotentiary are sent to foreign governments, but do not act in that capacity within the limits of the government by them represented. But was the Son of God sent beyond the limits of the divine government to a world of beings beyond the control of God, to settle some terms of mutual agreement between the two distinct governments? No. Why then are these flourishing titles used in reference to the advent of our Lord? Only to darken counsel by words without knowledge. The deep seated corruption of arminianism, which like the poison of an asp, flows through all the veins of H. Gear, and blinds his eyes to every correct sentiment on this subject. He sees not, nor can he see, unless it shall please the Lord to translate him from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the gospel, that the Son of God, in his mediatorial character, came into this world as the Surety and legal Representative of a peculiar people which were represented in him before they had an existence in the natural Adam, before they were defiled with sin or condemned by the law; and that he came to save his people, a people on whom he had a prior claim, from their sins. "For he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." But, so far is Mr. G. from understanding that Christ came as "A Redeemer out of Zion, to turn away ungodliness from Jacob," he supposes that he came to attempt to negotiate a treaty of peace with all mankind without discrimination. And to effect this, the Holy Spirit and angelic messengers were to aid him. If Mr. G. believes as he has said, that the Son is one of the three

persons that formed the council in eternity, and that he is, in any absolute sense, God, wherein can he suppose that he can be aided by angels? His views are not in harmony with them selves. But it is not true that Christ came to send peace on the earth, but a division; so Mr. G. has altogether mistaken the object of his advent. (Matt. x. 34.) Mr. G. also betrays as much ignorance of his real character, in supposing that he required the aid of even angels, as the Son of God; much less is he in need of such co-operators as modern missionaries. In his Godhead, Christ is the eternal God, equally with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In his mediatorial character he has taken on him the form of a servant, and in that form he learned obedience, &c., and in that peculiar character angels ministered to him. Mr. G. continues to slander our Lord thus, "To remove all doubts and satisfy even the most scrupulous of his authority as Messiah, he produced citation from the book of these ancient records, saying, 'Lo I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O God.'" How well has an inspired apostle charged such men as H. Gear with turning the truth of God into a lie. No less than two palpable misrepresentations are attempted to be passed off as bible testimony in the last item quoted from the famous or rather infamous sermon. First, that Christ produced citation in order to remove doubts from the most scrupulous, &c.; and secondly, that he quoted the words, "Lo I come," &c., from an ancient record of a council or convention of high consultation. The citation was not produced in treating with sinners, nor with such as entertain scruples, doubts, &c., of his being the true Messiah; but they were used. by our Lord Jesus Christ in his appeal to him of whom it was said, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me." Were these words addressed to unbelieving sinners, to those who doubted that Christ was the Messiah? Certainly not; hence the representation is false. And as citation is produced from.

Psalms xl. 7, 8, the attempt of Mr. G. to impress his hearers with the idea that these words were cited from some other record than that of the scriptures, is also false.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
Oct. 15, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 73 – 81

EXTRACT FROM H. GEAR'S SERMON.

(Concluded.)

"FOR three and thirty years," says Mr. Gear, "he trod the realms of the rebellious, seeking in ways manifold to do them good." That our Lord sojourned in the flesh thirty-three years, and that he went about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, casting out devils, raising the dead and reproving the scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites of that day, is true; but that lie sought in manifold ways to do them good is very far from the truth. Known unto God were all his works from the foundation of the world; hence the idea of his having to *seek* to do good is grossly incorrect. His reward was with him and his work before him. He came to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work; and has told us, "This is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing." And he has assured us that he will raise them all up at the last day. Mr. Gear would represent our Lord as having to try experiments in order to learn how to do good, &c. Away with such New School trash!

Mr. G. admits that Christ trod the wine-press of the wrath of God alone, but this is the only place where Mr. G. says he could be alone. This declaration speaks volumes. The New School believe that while Christ was alone in bearing the wrath of God, he is not alone in saving sinners. If treading the wine-press was the only place where Christ could be alone, and in every other department of the mediatorial work his modern missionaries are conjoined with him, then was he aided by his co-workers in rising from the dead, in leading captivity captive, in quickening and delivering from wrath his people, in raising the dead, in casting out devils, in making laws for the government of his kingdom, in sitting a priest

upon his throne, in bearing the glory, in calling, qualifying and sending forth his ministers to preach, in governing his subjects, and finally in raising the dead and judging the world. The New School suppose he will be in need of their aid. Such is the loftiness of the vain imagination of modern missionists.

"In every other department of labor," says Mr. G., "he would have his people with him; and especially does he call upon them in the work of instruction, in the spread and proclamation of the gospel, for the purpose of enlightening and winning souls to the love and practice of holiness." In what part of the sacred volume has God given this *special call* for co-operation in winning souls to holiness, &c.? It cannot be found. Souls are brought to the Love and practice of holiness in a very different manner from this. "God has made bare his arm in sight of the nations, and all the earth shall see the salvation of the Lord." His arm is not, as H. Gear seems to suppose, concealed by filthy rags of human righteousness, effort or co-operation, but wherever his salvation is known, his arm, made bare, is seen. How ridiculous the thought, that men are to aid the blazing Sun of Righteousness in enlightening souls, or to add charms to the glory of the everlasting gospel in order to win them; and equally absurd is the notion that the gospel is to be spread by the aid of men or angels. The gospel is the power of God through faith unto salvation; and is poor finite, depraved man to aid the Lord Jehovah in spreading his power? Fuller's gospel, or any other human device for the darkening of counsel, may be facilitated by the labor of man; but all the men on earth, with all the angels in heaven, would be quite insufficient to send the gospel of God our Savior into the heart of one poor helpless soul. That spurious system bandied about by college-taught dandies in black coats, is quite a different thing from the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Here," adds Mr. G., "in the language of Paul we are

laborers together with God." But the apostle Paul never used any such language. The words quoted, Mr. G. should know, if he be the scholar he pretends to be, were put into Paul's month by king James' translators, and the apostle has only claimed for himself and brethren that they were laborers together *under* God. But willing to rest his arrogant and presumptuous claim upon a misstatement of Paul's words, the poor silly school-boy exclaims in the ecstacy to which he had lashed himself, "O what honored and favored partnership!" Be astonished, O heavens! stand in amazement, O earth! In this nineteenth century the New School Baptists of these United States claim to be in partnership with God Almighty in the work of salvation! What more than this did the pope of Rome ever lay claim to? If these filthy dreamers are partners in the firm with God, they have a right to remit sins, to contract obligations, collect funds and appropriate them in the name of the firm. And this too they assay to do, hence we see the convenience of this claim, in order to justify them in offering heaven and eternal life for money, works, &c. We would have hoped that few could be found, even among New School Baptists, sufficiently hardened in blasphemy to take the daring stand of H. Gear, were it not that this sermon was called for and published by the convention of New School Baptists, and thus adopted as their sentiments. Salvation is held by them to be a mere partnership business between that God who will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images and missionists.

Do any begin to charge us with attaching to the words of H. Gear what he did not mean? We call on such to read his words which we have given *verbatim.* He says that while missionaries are endeavoring to draw souls to Christ, their work is identical with that of the Almighty Father, and "That while you are agonizing in spirit for the salvation of the lost, and seeking with all your heart to save them, you are

sympathizing deeply with the blessed Redeemer, and laboring in happy union with him in the same glorious object."

From this last quotation we see that the New School fraternity believe that the Almighty Father is endeavoring to draw souls to Christ, and the missionaries are engaged in identically the same work, so that God does no more, according to this doctrine, than the missionary does: both are endeavoring to draw souls to Christ. Can any person experimentally acquainted with the character of the God of Israel, believe that H. Gear, or the convention who have adopted his blasphemies, have any saving knowledge of the true God and eternal life? The Redeemer also is represented as agonizing and laboring with such co-partners as H. Gear for the accomplishment of the same object. The blessed Redeemer indeed agonized, once in the garden, sweat as it were drops of blood falling to the ground, and once upon the cross poured out his soul unto death; but he has risen and "Gone up with a shout and with the sound of a trumpet." To represent that our Redeemer is now agonizing in conjunction with a set of arminian religion mongers, is as false as the place where the lie was coined, and base as the spirit by which it is asserted.

But we pass to notice the application made of this abominable theory to the missionary speculations of the present age.

"1. *how great, &c., is the work of the ministry, especially that of the missionary.*" The work of the gospel ministry made the apostle Paul feel himself to be less than the least of all the saints. The missionary enterprise makes those engaged in it feel themselves to be greater than the highest angel iii heaven, swells their hearts with pride to that degree, that they say in the language of their prototype, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I

will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High." – Isa. xiv. 13, 14.

"2. *how careful should we be in the selection of persons to fill the ministerial and missionary offices.*" By this inference by Mr. Gear, drawn from premises in his sermon, the whole prerogative of selecting persons for the ministerial and missionary offices is claimed. He gives us not one single hint that the God of heaven has anything whatever to do in the matter of choosing whomsoever he will for the work. By this assumption of the divine prerogative, we are probably to understand that those wonderful partners in the firm which dwell on the earth are to regulate all the affairs of the church on earth. How modest this claim! We should be careful in selecting! If H. Gear and his colleagues can prove to us that they are in reality as they profess, co-partners with the persons in the Godhead, then we have nothing to say in reply to their assumption of the power aid government of God; but as we are among those who dispute their equality with the eternal God, we deny their right to interfere in the business of selecting persons for the ministry of the gospel. As the modern missionary Baptists now publicly claim to be vested with authority to select the persons to fill the ministerial offices, what have we to expect from them should they attain to the secular power of our country? When they shall mature their plans, and bring the legislative councils of our states to sanction their claims to be in partnership with time Almighty God, and that they have the right to select or reject whom they please, may we not reasonably look for the re-establishment of inquisitions, dungeons, flames and faggots to enforce their decisions?

The third inference drawn by Mr. G. is that, "3. *We see the wickedness of opposition to missions.*" All who oppose the base pretensions of such men as H. Gear & Co., are

denominated wicked opposers of missions, and they are charged with robbing the holiest and kindest beings of the universe of one of the richest sources of their enjoyment. 2d. Of standing in time way and hindering the progress of redemption. 3d. Of keeping mankind in sin. 4th. Of shutting them out from the means of attaining to the end of their creation; and of forming a character upon the model of Immanuel's. And lastly, of hostile array against the Holy Trinity. These charges relate to those who are called anti-missionary or Old School Baptists. Let us review them.

We are not aware that in opposing the blasphemy of H. Gear and his associates in abomination, that we are opposing and robbing the holiest and kindest beings of the universe. We pity the universe that contains men less holy and kind than the modern missionists. Their holiness is like that of the pope, only an assumed name to deceive; and their kindness is developed in robbing the poor, the widow and the fatherless of the last dollar, shilling or cent they can possibly wrench from them by deception and falsehood. Their feelings of kindness towards the Old Fashioned Baptists have been fully demonstrated for several years past, introducing confusion and discord, bringing in damnable heresy, dividing churches, robbing them of their meeting-houses, and finally in attempting to blast their characters and exterminate them from the land. Such are the characters who lay claim to the distinction of *holiest* and *best* of the universe.

2d. We are charged with hindering the progress of redemption! The scriptures inform us that Christ has obtained eternal redemption for his people; but Mr. G. says that the work of redemption is now in progress, and represents it as liable to hindrance if not to complete failure, in consequence of those charged with standing in the way. Who is to be believed? If the statement of the scriptures be true, it follows unavoidably that the statement of H. Gear is

false. On the charge of keeping mankind in sin we have no disposition to remark. We are however inclined to the opinion that man was involved in sin before the modern mission system or its opponents existed. The fourth charge is twofold, viz.: shutting mankind out from the means of attaining the end of their creation, and of forming characters upon the model of Immanuel. God has declared the end from the beginning, and said his purpose shall stand and he will do all his pleasure. As to any *means* by which man is to attain to the design of his creation the scriptures saith not. If any of the human family could prevent themselves or others from attaining the ultimate end or design for which they were created, it would necessarily prevent the accomplishment of God's pleasure and reflect upon his truth. According to New School theology Christ has only given a model of character to be imitated by modern missionists, and even that may be prevented by the opposers of missions. But what model or example did he leave in relation to mission operations? He accused the missionists of that age with compassing sea and land to make one proselyte, and of making such proselyte twofold more the child of hell than them selves. He taught his disciples to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers, but he never gave them a model for forming missionary societies organized upon monied principles, or to think them called upon to select or qualify men for the gospel ministry. Last, but not least, he says that we stand in hostile array against the most delightful work of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Thus the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are represented as being less delighted with the works of creation, providence and grace than with the partnership works of the missionary establishment in conjunction with these persons of the Godhead. Comparing all the works of God, Mr. G. would set them all in the back ground, and represent that God is more delighted with the foolish mummery, base hypocrisy and heaven-daring blasphemy of the present times, than with all the glory of the heavens or

the songs of the redeemed. To represent the choicest pleasure of the great eternal God subject to interruption by men we should have supposed sufficiently derogatory to the divine honor; but alas! for poor infatuated man.

The fourth inference drawn by Mr. G. from his sermon is, "4. *We learn the great desire and anxiety of God that sinners should repent."* Christians, is this a true description of your God? Is he desirous or anxious for the repentance of a greater number of sinners than he is able to bring to repentance? How feeble, how weak, how inefficient must Jehovah be in the estimation of modern missionists! Truly we may say with Moses, "Their rock is not as our Rock; our enemies themselves being judges." Our God hath mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Theirs is desirous, yea anxious for the repentance of sinners; has provided ample means for their salvation; invited them in the most cordial manner to turn and live; has set forth bands of bright celestial beings to charm them to repentance by the music of their harps and the rapture of their songs.

If the God they worship has provided ample means for the salvation of mankind, why do the missionaries constantly harass the people to furnish means? Not a nook nor corner remains unexplored by their hungry mendicants in search of money to be employed as means for bringing sinners to repentance and evangelizing the world.

We leave Mr. Gear and his compeers to meet the retribution that awaits them for their blasphemy and falsehood, assured, as God is true, their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

Had Mr. G. uttered and published his sermon upon his own responsibility we should have regarded him and his

production unworthy the notice of our readers; but as this sermon comes to us under the sanction of the Western Convention of New School Baptists we have a right to regard it as expressing the sentiment of the whole fraternity of the same order throughout the United States.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
Nov. 1, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 81 – 88

EXTRACT FROM “W. C. C’S.” COMMUNICATION.

“BROTHER Joseph Baker keeps an excellent Female Seminary, assisted by able teachers, in the branches of an ornamental and polite education, and he preaches to three churches. By the way, let me urge brethren to follow his example. He carries the publications of the American Tract Society to all his appointments, and has already distributed a considerable quantity. Go thou and do likewise. Every Thursday night he preaches in his school-room. I preached there to a crowded audience. One year he paid $50 for a room; but he ought not to pay for room rent out of his own pocket; – some effort should be made to get a house in Winchester. It is a shame that a place numbering over 5,000 inhabitants should be represented chiefly by Hardshell Baptists. At Strasburg, Shenandoah Co., the Rev. Gilbert Beebe gave out my notice, and said that I “would not preach the gospel, but say something about tracts.” He was returning from New Market, Where the Ketocton Association held its meeting. In a late SIGNS OF THE TIMES he has copied my article calling for 3,000 for the Virginia Tract Society, upon which he makes some very *queer* remarks. By mistake, I stopped at one of the Old Fashioned Baptists. He told me that brother Buck had recently called on him with brother Trott; the former filled up his soul with joy by a sweet sermon from the song of Solomon; the latter comforted him beyond description, in putting his things into his saddle-bags. Deluded souls,

“‘Like barren sands, imbibe the shower,
But yield not either fruit or flower.’”

As we find our name placed in the good company of brethren Buck and Trott, it might be thought uncourteous in us to pass

the article by in silence. The writer of the article before us has awarded to the Old School Baptists the very significant appellation, *Hardshell*, and indeed we do not wonder that he should so consider us, seeing that all the arrows and missles thrown at us from the New School party fall so harmless at our feet. He has not yet understood that the shield which our glorious Leader has provided for his followers possesses the quality of quenching the fiery darts of the devil.

This gentleman has been traveling extensively, as appears from his communication, and seems to have been exploring the country for the purpose of looking out such locations as he might think most favorable for the establishment of New School machinery. Populous cities, flourishing villages and rich country places have irresistible charms in his eye. He has only to find the place, and then call on his co-operators for men and money, and the work goes on. With him it is a shame that. the *Hardshell* Baptists have an existence at Winchester, Va. But unto whom does he intend to impute shame? God has raised up in that city a monument of his goodness and grace. God has located them there, and does this blasphemous wretch intend to charge the God of heaven with shame? Does he believe that God has anything to do with raising New School or *Softshell* Baptists? If so, still the charge of shame is impiously hurled at his Maker! Or does he only wish to awaken a spirit of persecution against the people of God, and to appeal to the pride of Winchester to rouse up her sons to wipe off the reproach by exterminating the Old School Baptists from their city? With what an envious eye he looks upon the church of Jesus Christ wherever he finds them in his travels. If he only means to shame his own party for suffering an Old School Baptist church to exist at Winchester, he is both unjust and ungenerous, for that party have done all in their power to drive them from the ground.

In regard to the affair at Strasburg, when we were returning from Ebenezer (not Ketocton) Association, at New Market, we preached at Strasburg, and finding a written note laying on the pulpit, of the Presbyterian House which we occupied, we were told that it contained an appointment, which we understood our brother Hupp to say we were desired to publish. At the close of the meeting we took up the paper and read to the congregation, as near as our recollection now serves, as follows: "Elder Crane, preach in this house on ––evening, and present the claims of the American Tract Society, (and perhaps) the Bible Society." After having read the paper, we remarked that the appointment was not for preaching the gospel of Christ, but for presenting the claims of the institutions named in the note. And this we did on the authority of the note. We did not say that he would not preach the gospel, but that the appointment was not for that purpose. If, however, Mr. Crane did preach any gospel on that evening, and it can be made so to appear by him or his friends, we shall conclude that a corrupt fountain can send forth pure water. His allusion to our *queer* remarks on his offer to mortgage heaven for $3,000, requires no reply from us, as he does not dispute what we have written on that subject; and how queer the truth may sound to one so accustomed to error, we are not prepared to say.

That his calling on an Old School Baptist was by mistake, is altogether probable, as he could have very little occasion for calling on any but New Fashioned Baptists. To hear an Old Fashioned Baptist tell of his soul's being fed, comforted or filled with joy and gratitude on hearing brother Buck or Trott preach from the song of Solomon, or from any other part of divine revelation, would be very likely to sound queer to him. It would undoubtedly be more interesting to him to call on one of his own sort, and hear him talk of hearing sermons from missionary agents, presenting the claims of the clergy upon the pockets of the laity. The couplet quoted, and with

which lie concludes his remarks concerning the *Hardshells*, whom he calls " deluded souls," is expressive of his feelings, in common with those of his fellow-craftsmen, that while the Old Fashioned Baptists imbibe the dew of divine grace, and the showers of refreshing from on high, they yield no support to their humanly devised institutions.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
October 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 348 – 351

EZEKIEL 17:22-24.

Reply to Brother B. Bundy, on Ezekiel 17:22-24: - “Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon a high mountain and eminent; in the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it; and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar; and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish; I, the Lord, have spoken and have done it.”

In this chapter the prophet was instructed to put forth a riddle and speak a parable unto the house of Israel, in which Israel is represented as a high cedar. The king of Israel and his seed, were as the top of the young twigs of its highest branch. The king of Babylon is represented in the riddle as a great eagle, with great and long wings, and full of feathers, coming to Jerusalem and bringing the king of Israel and his seed under tribute to Babylon. And the king of Egypt as another great eagle, with great wings and many feathers, to whom the king of Israel looked for aid, in violation of his covenant and oath; and the interposition of God in frustrating the designs of the perjured king. And in the conclusion of the chapter we have a declaration of what God himself would do, both in frustrating the devices of men, and in accomplishing his own sovereign purpose concerning Israel. This purpose is declared in the text which we are called to explain. In responding to the call of brother Bundy, we can only give him such views as we have on the subject. Without attempting any further explanation of the two great eagles, Babylon and Egypt, than what God has himself given in this chapter, from

the twenty-fifth verse, inclusive, we will offer such views as we have on what is declared in the last three verses of the chapter.

First, we call attention to the high authority from which the declaration comes. “Thus saith the Lord God,” the supreme ruler and controller of all events, who doth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; who commands, and it stands fast, who speaks the word, and it is done. God that cannot lie hath spoken it. He says, “I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar and will set it.” Israel is undoubtedly intended by the high cedar, exalted to heaven, as our Lord said of Capernaum, and other cities of Judah. Matthew 11:20-24. The highest branch of Israel was Judah. See Genesis 49:8-12. This branch was set in dominion over all the other tribes of Israel, or branches of this high cedar, according to the prophetic blessing, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.” The young twigs of this lofty branch of the high cedar represents the latest productions, or developments of the tribe or branch from which they shoot forth. As in the riddle in the beginning of this chapter, the top twigs cropped off by the great eagle, are explained to mean the king and princes of Israel; so in our text we must understand the royal seed in its latest development. “Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar.” He does not say that he will take the highest branch; but he will take *of* the highest branch; nor does he say that he would take the young twigs; but he says, “I will crop off from the top of his young twigs, a tender one.” Even as some of these twigs had been taken off by the great Babylonian eagle, so from the top of these young twigs of a still later development, would he crop off a tender one, which he would set, and which he would plant upon a high mountain and eminent.

We think there can be no doubt that this tender one is our Lord Jesus Christ; "For it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah." Hebrews 7:14. As David was of the tribe of Judah, "Therefore he being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne." Acts 2:30. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:6,7. "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots." Isaiah 11:1. "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zechariah 6:12,13. Observe that by lineal descent from David, our Lord was entitled to the throne and kingdom of David, to the temporal government, and in this sense he was born king of the Jews. But he had not come into the world to be temporal king, and therefore he must be cropped off, or cut off from the high cedar, and from the top of the young, or latest twigs of that tree, and be planted; and, like a corn of wheat, fall into the earth and die, rising from the dead, grow up out of his place, (his place among the young twigs of the high branch of the cedar, or commonwealth of Israel). Thus when he came in the flesh, he should grow up before the Lord, as a *tender plant* . Isaiah 53:2. Agreeing with the description in our text, "a tender one," and yet he should be raised up by the Father, as "a plant of renown." Ezekiel

34:29. He should be planted on a high mountain and eminent. “In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it,” saith the Lord. Of this mountain of the house of the Lord, high and eminent, we are told in prophecy, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it.” Isaiah 2:2 & Micah 4:1. This house is the church of God, built up of lively stones, fitly framed, and builded for a habitation, in which God has said, Here I dwell forever. I Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:21,22; Psalm 132:13-17. God says he has laid in Zion for a foundation, a stone. Isaiah 28:16. And the psalmist says, “His foundation is in the holy mountain.” Psalm 87:1. Thus clearly showing that the high mountain of Israel, and eminent, in which he has planted this “tender one,” is none other than his church, which he came to redeem and save.

The planting and setting up of this tender one, cropped off from the royal twigs of Judah, deserves more than a passing notice. As in the tender twigs of the uttermost branches of the stately cedars are found the seed or germ for propagation, so in Christ, as the Second Adam, was, and is, the life and immortality of all his members. He is the quickening Spirit, from whom all his members are made alive from the dead. For the manifestation of *this one,* Israel waited till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made. “He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.” Galatians 3:16. Now of the planting of this seed let us hear what Christ himself has said. “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” John 12:23,24. As the Son of man he stood connected with the highest branch of the high cedar, being the son of David,

and of the tribe of Judah; while as the Son of God, he was David's Lord. "Concerning his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David, after the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Romans 1:3,4. It appears to us that when our Mediatorial Head was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, he took on him the seed of Abraham, and was sown in the earth, and embodied in that flesh, was so identified with them that all their sins were laid on him; he was legally the seed of Abraham, and under the law, and as such he was put to death in the flesh, cut off from the high cedar, and by his circumcision, in the putting away the body of the sins of the flesh, was planted in the earth, and in the nature of his elect people died in the earth, was buried by baptism into death, was planted therein, so as to become dead to the law, and the end of the law for righteousness; for, "Know ye not, brethren, [for I speak to them that know the law] how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman that hath a husband is bound by the law of her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God."

Thus when Jesus died in the flesh, he was to be known no more after the flesh, or as a Jew, or twig of that branch of the cedar from which he was cut off. The corn of wheat that fell into the ground died; but in his resurrection, he was quickened and justified in the Spirit. Raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, he passed beyond the precincts of that law and flesh under and in which he had been put to death, and having thus abolished death, brought life and immortality to light. Dieth no more, death hath no more

dominion over him. He that went forth weeping, and bearing precious seed, has returned with joy, bearing his sheaves with him; for "The Lord is risen indeed, and has become the first fruits of them that slept."

Thus was the tender one cropped from the young twigs of the highest branch of Israel, planted, and that relation in which under the law he was known as the son of David after the flesh, and in his resurrection life he comes forth from the dead, from under the curse and dominion of the law, growing up out of his place, in the cedar, or Israel in the flesh, and the tender plant grows up, as the Plant of Renown, in the mountain of the house of the Lord. In the high mountain and eminent of his resurrected, or regenerated church, he is now seen as the "True Vine" of which his Father is the Husbandman. And as the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, he is exalted to be a Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

"The kings of the earth *set* themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed." Psalm 2:2. But they shall be unseated, and their counsels shall not stand; for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. "Yet have I *set* my King upon my holy hill of Zion." His kingdom shall endure as the days of heaven, of his dominion there shall be no end. "A glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary." Planted upon this mountain, high and eminent. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is without end."

"In the mountain of the house of the Lord will I plant it, and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar." The highest elevation of Israelis that Jerusalem which is above, and is free. Risen with Christ, and established in the mountain of his holiness. With the Lamb standing upon

mount Zion; dwelling in God; can there be any higher elevation than this of the spiritual Israel? Here grows the tree of Life, within the Holy City, with spreading branches, bearing twelve manner of fruits; yielding her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2. Our Redeemer says to his disciples, "I am the Vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5. As the vine is in the branches, the branches being a part of the vine, so the branches are in the vine; and without this vital union and identity no fruit could be borne. So this goodly cedar is in the branches, and the branches are all the goodly cedar, and thus connected, God says it shall bear fruit and be a goodly cedar.

"And under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell." This declaration may mean the gathering of the Gentiles, or rather of God's chosen people from every kindred and tribe of the earth, into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they may dwell under the protection, and be subject to the laws and ordinances of the church of God. Whether this be a correct application of the figure or not, we know that God will gather into his kingdom all his redeemed ones, out of every nation, kindred and tongue under heaven. But as the birds are no part of the tree, it may be designed to represent those nominal professors of Christianity, hypocrites, and imposters, which have in all ages of the church secreted and shielded themselves under a covering of pretended piety, to take away their reproach. Whatever may have been the primary design of this part of the figure, we know that the people of God, of every description as to nationality, grade or condition in nature, shall come to Zion like clouds and as doves to their windows, and shall abide under the shadow and protection of this goodly cedar. And it is also true that birds of every wing,

vultures, owls, and every unclean and hateful bird, have annoyed the church of God by lodging in her branches.

"And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree flourish." All the trees of the field must mean all the nations of the earth. As Israel in her nationality was the stately cedar tree, so the Gentile nations are the trees of the field, or world. And all the nations of the earth shall know the reality of what God hath spoken. "Break forth into joy, and sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." Isaiah 52:9,10. All the nations of the world know that God has brought down the Jewish nation from the lofty eminence they once held among the nations of the earth, and driven out the carnal Israelites to wander among the Gentile nations. And they shall all know that God has exalted his poor and afflicted people. He has dried up the green tree, there is no sap or vitality any more in their rituals, their ordinances or sacrifices, their types or ceremonies; for the anti-type has come, and their solemn feasts, and vain oblations are abominable in his sight. But the church of God among the Gentiles is exalted, and made green and fruitful, and it shall flourish like the Palm tree, and grow like the cedars of Lebanon.

"I the Lord have spoken, and have done it." He speaks the word and it stands fast; He commands and it is done. The words which go forth out of his mouth shall not return to him void; they shall accomplish that for which they are sent, or spoken, and shall prosper in that he please.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 516 – 522

EZEKIEL 18:27,31; 33:11

Elder Beebe: - If it will not be trespassing on your tune and patience too much, you will oblige an occasional reader of the "Signs of the Times" by giving your views on Ezekiel 18:27,31; also 33:11.

Very respectfully,
E.G.D.
Howard Co., MD, Nov. 22, 1862.

Our friend, E. G. D., must be but an occasional reader of the "Signs of the Times" if he has not been able to learn our views on the nature and bearings of the covenant of works, with its conditions, rewards and punishments, as enjoined upon the house of Israel when under the legal dispensation, as we have been frequently called on to express them through our columns during the thirty years of our labors in the publication of this paper. Still, as our object is to set forth the truth, and expose error, we desire to respond to the inquiries of our occasional as well as our constant readers.

The portion of Scripture referred to reads as follows: "Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." "Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart, and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

These appeals were not made indiscriminately to the family of mankind, but in both chapters they are addressed to the house of Israel. The house of Israel means the family of

Israel or Jacob, those who compose the household. Those who were embraced in the covenant of circumcision, which was a covenant of works, based upon the conditions explicitly set forth in the covenant, which were, that if the sons of Jacob would faithfully, truly and constantly obey all the precepts of the law which was given exclusively to them, they should live, and as a reward for their fidelity and strict obedience God would preserve them from the sword of their enemies, from the famine and from the pestilence; from all the agencies which waste and destroy human life, and they should surely live. As the apostle says, “The law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them.” (Gal. 3:12) This is precisely in substance what God has said to the house of Israel by the mouth, or pen, of Ezekiel in our text; the man that doeth that which is lawful and right shall live, or preserve his soul alive. None but sinners are mortal, hence none but sinners can die, and sin is the transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression or death, for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. The same apostle, in the same connection, and dwelling on the same subject, says, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith.” (Gal. 3:10-12)

The attentive reader of the Scriptures will not fail to perceive that the law which was given as a conditional covenant to the nation or commonwealth of Israel, was the shadow of good things to come, and consequently typical in all its provisions, precepts and tendencies; it was adapted to them as a carnal people, and all who were circumcised in their flesh were debtors to do the whole law; that is, to obey all its precepts, on pain of death. The death to which it sentenced its

delinquents was temporal, to be executed by sword, famine or pestilence, or by depriving the offender of his natural life. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses. The penalty was often executed by stoning the convict with stones until he was dead. The blessings awarded to the willing and obedient were that they should eat the good of the land, they should be protected in their persons and property from sword, pestilence and famine, and their corn and wine and oil should be increased, and their days should be long and prosperous in the land which the Lord their God had given them. There is not in all the law of Moses a promise of one spiritual blessing for obedience, or any other than temporal judgments for their disobedience. Neither heaven or hell were promised or threatened in that law. For if a law had been given that could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. All the Old Testament saints, and all the saints from the days of Abel, depended for eternal life with every spiritual blessing alone on the blood and righteousness of the Savior who was to come; and all mankind, including Gentiles as well as Jews, who were or are not interested in that blood and righteousness, have stood justly condemned to bear the wrath of God forever, from the moment they all sinned against God in their father Adam; from the moment Adam transgressed, not the law of Moses, but the law of God, under which he was, death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. From that hour to the present no other blood has ever had or ever will have the power to atone for that sin, or cleanse from that guilt, but the precious blood of Christ, as of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Rivers of blood of victims offered in sacrifice under the Levitical priesthood could not take away sin, or purge the conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The law of Moses was not required to consign sinners to hell, for they were already condemned, with the wrath of God abiding on them. In evidence of this the apostle tells us that death

reigned from Adam to Moses; that was during the whole space of time from the entrance of sin into the world until the giving of the law of Moses, for until the law, or prior to it, sin was in the world, and it being in the world, was fully demonstrated by the reign of death. Now, as the law by Moses was not given to give immortality or eternal life, and as the Scriptures affirm that it could not give it, the conclusion is unavoidable that the life spoken of in these passages in Ezekiel was temporal life, secured by obedience to the Mosaic law to the Hebrews who were under it, and not that eternal life which Jesus says he gives to his sheep, or to his redeemed people. “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Not given through the law, nor through our obedience to the law, for it is not of works, lest any man should boast. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” (Romans 8:3,4)

Such, then, we see was the nature of the law by which the house of Israel was distinguished from all other nations and tribes of mankind as a covenant of works, resting all its provisions of rewards and punishments on conditions of their obedience, it bestowed all its temporal blessings on them for their obedience, and dealt all its temporal judgments on them for their disobedience. When they did that which was lawful and right, God gave them corn, wine and oil, fought their battles, subdued their enemies, caused their land to yield abundant supplies for their subsistence, and when they rebelled, disregarded the law and committed abominations, these temporal favors were withheld, and they were scourged with such temporal judgments as sword, famine and pestilence, were delivered into the hands of their enemies, and they were made to languish and die, as these

were the stern conditions of the law as a covenant of works. Hence the expostulations contained in these passages of Ezekiel, all that was said, was what they knew were the terms and conditions of their covenant. When they sinned they died, when they obeyed they lived; and they were held personally responsible. The unjust parable which they had used, that, The fathers had eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth were set on edge, was shown by the expostulations of the prophet to be unjust and wicked. And such were the provisions of the covenant, that if a wicked man (an Israelite, of course, for none but Israelites were embraced in the covenant,) turned from his wickedness and did that which was lawful and right, he should live; he should be restored to all the privileges of that covenant. But if a righteous man ceased to do righteously, and committed wickedness, his former righteousness should not shield him from the penalty of the law, or save him from being put to death for his wickedness.

These Israelites of the house of Israel, as we see in Ezekiel 18, had turned away from their obedience to the law, and were exposed to the penalties of the law, which was death, but as the covenant which they were under contained this provision, they were called on by the prophet to reform, and live, to cast away all their transgressions, make them a new heart and a new spirit, and they should live. Thus showing that the salvation which was typified in the law, was such a salvation as could only be effected by that divine power which is required to make a new heart, and to create within them a right spirit, and that no man can perform this work the prophet shows; in chapter 36 the Lord says, "I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went." "Thus saith the Lord God; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen." "And I will sanctify my great name," etc. "For I will

take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God." By comparing Ezekiel 18:31,32, with chapter 36 we see what the law demands. Who is able to make himself a new heart? Who can create in himself a new spirit? Or who is able to cast away all his transgressions? Those who know the law despair of ever being able to meet its requisitions. But God reveals from heaven his method of grace and salvation, and proclaims what he himself will do, and in the Scriptures copied from Ezekiel 36, promises to meet every requisition demanded in Ezekiel 18:31, and to do it for his own name's sake.

The passage, Ezekiel 33:11, is also an expostulation with the house of Israel, in regard to the provisions of the covenant of works, and a full denial of the unjust murmurings of that stiffnecked and rebellious people, in which they virtually charged God with delighting in their sufferings. This imputation is refuted by an exhibition of the provisions of their covenant of works.

Middletown, N.Y.,
December 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 296 – 300

EZEKIEL XXXIII. 11.

ELDER G. BEEBE AND SON – DEAR SIRS: – Please give your views on this passage of scripture, and oblige a reader of the SIGNS: "God wills not the death of any, but would rather all would turn unto him and live." I have been searching for this passage, but failed to find it, and consequently cannot tell where to find; but I have heard it quoted frequently by revivalists.

Yours truly,
A WELL WISHER.
Cedar Grove, Ohio, Feb. 15, 1881

REPLY. – A "Well Wisher" will search the sacred volume of the inspired scriptures long and vainly before he will find the passage as he has stated it, or as it is generally stated by modern revivalists and other sensational preachers, who handle the words of God deceitfully in order to excite the eternal passions of their deluded victims, and draw them into their nets and snares. The words spoken by God to his ancient people Israel, who were held in a peculiar relation to him, as chosen and separated from all the Gentile nations of the earth in a covenant of works, which pertained exclusively to them, requiring of them strict obedience to the provisions of that covenant, and for disobedience to what it required of them, denounced temporal judgments, such as sword, famine and pestilence, and temporal death in extreme cases; and for strict obedience they were to be blessed with corn, wine and oil, and shielded from the sword, famine, and pestilence, and enjoy security from invasions and disaster. To them God spake by the mouth of Ezekiel the prophet, saying, "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evils ways;

for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" – Ezek. xxxiii. 11. This message was addressed to the house of Israel, and to no other people under heaven, and had no reference to eternal life, which is alone through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; nor to the endless perdition of the ungodly, which is called the second death. The connection of this text in the same chapter shows that the life spoken of was secured to the house of Israel by turning from their transgressions against the covenant which they were under, and doing the things required of them as the covenant people of the Lord; but the salvation from perdition is not attainable by any works of righteousness which they have done or can do. The salvation which is in Christ Jesus is not by works, lest any man should boast. Neither good nor bad works can save us from that death to which the ungodly word is already condemned; for the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, "Who hath saved us [his saved people], and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." – 2 Tim. i. 9. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." – Rom. ix. 16.

The house of Israel were under the law of a carnal commandment, and from the temporal judgments of that covenant they could save themselves by works of obedience to its requisitions; but they were also held under a law from the judgments of which they could not release themselves, for "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in the sight of God. If a law had been given that could have given life (eternal life), verily righteousness should have been by the law; but we are told that the law was given that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no

flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." – Rom. iii. 19, 20.

The house or family of Israel, in the flesh and under the law of Moses, as chosen of God from all the families of the earth to be a peculiar people, and as redeemed from the house of bondage, is a type of the spiritual Israel redeemed from sin and death by the precious blood of Christ; and the ceremonial law which the carnal Israel was under is typical of the laws which are given under the gospel dispensation for the discipline of the spiritual Israel under the new covenant; and as the willing and obedient under the old legal covenant ate the good of the land, so christians in obedience under the new and better covenant enjoy the approving smiles of the Redeemer and fellowship of the church of Christ. And as under the typical covenant the disobedient and disorderly were subjected to sword, famine and pestilence for their transgressions, and even to death, when they turned not away from their evil ways; so the children of the new covenant, who walk disorderly, are beaten with many stripes, and if they persist in their disorderly course, are excluded from the fellowship of the church. If they live after the flesh, they shall die; but if they through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, they shall live. – Rom. viii. 13.

The house or family of Israel, in the flesh and under the law of Moses, as chosen of God from all the families of the earth to be a peculiar people, and as redeemed from the house of bondage, is a type of the spiritual Israel redeemed from sin and death by the precious blood of Christ; and the ceremonial law which the carnal Israel was under is typical of the laws which are given under the gospel dispensation for the discipline of the spiritual Israel under the new covenant; and as the willing and obedient under the old legal covenant ate the good of the land, so christians in obedience under the new and better covenant enjoy the approving smiles of the

Redeemer and fellowship of the church of Christ. And as under the typical covenant the disobedient and disorderly were subjected to sword, famine and pestilence for their transgressions, and even to death, when they turned not away from their evil ways; so the children of the new covenant, who walk disorderly, are beaten with many stripes, and if they persist in their disorderly course, are excluded from the fellowship of the church. If they live after the flesh, they shall die; but if they through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, they shall live. – Rom. viii. 13.

This application of the types to their legitimate antitypes is in perfect harmony with all the scriptures of truth; but the application made by will-worshipers and carnal revivalists would turn the truth of God into a lie, and represent the holy scriptures as a confused paradoxical mass of contradictions.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 9.
May 1, 1881.

FAITH.

There is perhaps at the present day as much said about Faith, and the term is as frequently used in modern theology as any other word used in our version of the Scriptures, but it is generally used in a sense entirely foreign to that of its legitimate scriptural meaning. Webster, guided undoubtedly by the decisions of learned (so called) Doctors of Divinity, defines the word thus: "Belief; the assent of the mind to the truth of what is declared by another; the assent of the mind to the truth of a proposition advanced by another; belief, on probable evidence. And, in theology, the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed. Evangelical, or justifying, or saving Faith, is the assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation, on the authority of God's testimony, accompanied with a cordial assent of the will, or approbation of the heart," &c. And this is about the view which is entertained by a very large majority of the religionists of the present day. No idea seems to be entertained by Webster, nor by the learned theologians, from whom he borrows his theory, that the mind of man is a carnal or fleshly mind, that it is at enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed, can be. Indeed, the prevailing doctrine of all will-worshipers, and carnal religionists, is that regeneration, the new birth, and all that is involved in the christian experience, is only to give some new impulse to our old carnal faculties, a new direction to the old carnal mind, and a new inclination and direction to the affections and lusts of the flesh. To be born again, in their estimation is, as Watts says, to

"New model all the carnal mind,
And form the man afresh."

This is a fundamental error comprising the ground of difference between the religion which is of the world, and that which is of God. The worldly system, supposing that man is a free agent, possessing all requisite power to will and to do that which is necessary and indispensable to commend him to the favor of God, and to secure immortal glory beyond the grave, labors to influence the carnal or natural mind by moral suasion, that it would be advantageous and profitable to yield assent to such theories as tradition points out as pious, and calculated to secure the favor of God. The selfish inclinations of the unrenewed heart are appealed to, and such incentives, motives and allurements are presented, as the carnal mind can appreciate, to draw the corrupt, depraved, deceitful and desperately wicked propensities and imaginations of the mind into a new channel, without any radical change or implantation of any new principle. Under this delusion, Infant and Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and all the machinery to them belonging, are employed to bend the twig the way they wish the tree to grow, without observing that the nature and character of the twig is in no wise changed by such restraints; without heeding the immutable standard set up by Christ himself: First make the tree good, and the fruit will be good. A twig growing out of a corrupt tree will partake of the corruption of that tree, incline or bend it which every way we may. In all the Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites detected and rebuked by our Lord, we have exemplifications of the carnal mind religionized by traditional influences. The influence may multiply converts to Judaism, or any other workmongrel religious persuasion and it is employed with the same results at the present time, as when the self-righteous pharisees compassed sea and land to make proselytes to their faith. Now if the assent of the natural mind of man to the force of testimony is the faith which accompanies salvation, why is it so called? What new principle does such an assent develop? Had not the natural, carnal, depraved mind of man in its most degraded condition

the requisite faculty to yield an assent to any demonstrated proposition, set home by the force of overwhelming testimony? This theory, if it can be established, will be of great service to the whole Arminian world, because it calls for no more grace now to make a christian, than was formerly required to make a Jewish proselyte.

But let us not be deceived, God is not mocked; however plausible or palatable this theory may be in the estimation of men, it cannot stand the test of eternal truth. The Scriptures are regarded by us as they have always been by the church of God, as an infallible standard of our faith, both as to faith as a vital principle in the hearts of God's people, and the doctrine of the gospel embraced and comprehended by that faith. Then let us turn to the law and to the testimony, for if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. The Scriptures instead of representing faith as a creature of ours, expressly define it to be the gift of God. Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, that we should believe on him. We are bound to give thanks unto God always for you, brethren, beloved of God, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. And we are not only assured that faith is not of ourselves, but it is the gift of God, but we are also told that Jesus Christ is both the author and the finisher of faith which is unto life. Furthermore, we are informed that saving faith is the faith of the Son of God; it cannot, therefore, be an assent of the natural mind. Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved me and given himself for me." It is also distinguished from all other kinds of faith as that faith which is of the operation of God.

The inspired Paul, having analyzed poor, fallen, human nature, sums up its legitimate productions in striking contrast with the fruits of the Spirit: "Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revilings, and such like." That is, all the other emanations from the flesh are like those above specified, and faith is not found among them. "But," he continues, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." - Gal. v. 19-23. Here we find gospel faith enumerated among the fruits of the Spirit, and in direct opposition to the works of the flesh.

Another inspired apostle, treating on the origin and power of the gospel faith, informs us that it is born of God, and that it overcomes the world. "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." - 1 John v.4. If a faith originating in us, or born of the flesh, could overcome the world, it would show that the world is not equal to itself, that it contained in itself, and of itself, a power superior to, and capable of overcoming itself. This faith, being born of God, must be animated by the life and immortality and power of God. It is vital, but its vitality is of God, and not of the creature, hence it can and does overcome the world. The eleventh chapter to the Hebrews presents us with many examples of its power to overcome the world. After many illustrious examples of the power of faith in the patriarchs and prophets, says, "And what shall I more say? for time would fail me to tell of Gideon and of Barak, and of Samson, and Jephthae, of David also, and Samuel, and of all the prophets, who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of the fire, escaped the edge of

the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins; being destitute, afflicted and tormented. Now this faith, and all its power, is in this very connection, ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. xii. 2.)

As the faith which is peculiar to the children of God, is in all respects essentially different from the faith of men and of devils in regard to its origin, its nature, its vitality and its power, so it is equally distinct from theirs in all its workings, operations, perceptions and associations.

That of men is perfectly manageable by them, and they boast that they can exercise it at their pleasure; and why should they not? If they have given it being, they ought of course to be able to control it, and to have much, little, or none of it, as they please. But the faith of God's elect, being born of God, and his special gift, has a divine power over his children in whom its divine power is developed; they cannot exercise it, but they are exercised by it. That faith which is of the flesh, works by fear, and corrupts its possessors with all manner of delusion, causing them to believe a lie, and to suffer the consequences of their delusion, but that faith which is born of God, works by love, and purifies the soul, or him who is the happy recipient of it, for it enables him to discriminate between truth and error. Hence while the Arminian will-worshiper requires the preaching of terror, wrath, fire, brimstone, and such as is calculated to excite the carnal passions of the flesh, and produce fear and terror, the very melody of heaven, breathed forth by the Spirit of the

gospel, and the melting strains of the gospel, which set forth the eternal, immutable, and transforming love of God, calls forth the active workings of the faith of the saints. And while the faith of the world inflates the pride of those who are under its influence, leading them to boast of their works, their piety, their zeal, and their benevolence, that faith which is of God, leads his children to worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Jesus Christ, and to have no confidence in the flesh. The perceptive qualities are equally dissimilar. The faith of the flesh looks for signs, like the Jews, and to seek after wisdom, like the Greeks; but that which is of God, is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, and it qualifies them to look not on the things which are seen, which are temporal, but directs them to the things which are not seen, which are eternal. It qualifies them to see the kingdom of God, and makes them experimentally familiar with the things of the Spirit, which are hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.

The faith which is of the world has its associations with the theories, doctrines and commandments of men, the delusions, heresies, idolatry and spiritual wickedness of high places; it gives it possessors a place with the enemies of the cause of God and truth, and identifies them with those who stoned the prophets, crucified the Son of God, and slaughtered the apostles of the Lamb of God; holding then their place under the delusion that they ought to do many things contrary to Jesus of Nazareth, and that they do God service when they persecute his people and oppose his truth. On the other hand the faith of the gospel brings those who are born of God unto the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God. They have one Lord, one faith and one baptism; they are but one body, having one Spirit, even as they are all called in one hope of their calling. The faith of Christ in his people, is inseparably associated with all the other fruits of the Spirit, as love, joy, peace, long-suffering,

&c., and the end of this faith is the salvation of our souls. So far is this faith from receiving any support from the flesh, it is constantly opposed by the flesh and every power and faculty of the flesh, but as it overcomes the world, it shall ultimately triumph over all our corruption, doubts, fears, unbelief, and over sin and death, and bear the saints away from every opposition, to that divine abode in glory where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

Middletown, N.Y., February 15, 1858.
Editorials of Gilbert Beebe
Vol. 4 Pgs 60 – 65

FAITH

Dear Sir: Not having been a reader of your paper, I may in the following question repeat one which during your editorial labors you have often had propounded. It is on the subject of faith. Will you, or some of your correspondents, be so kind as to give your views on the proposition whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the creation or operation of his faith, or whether it be the exclusive gift of God? If your time and space will permit, your answer in the "Signs of the Times" will be very welcome.

R.W. Monroe. Evansville, W. Va.
January25, 1865.

By faith, we presume our correspondent means evangelical or gospel faith, that faith without which it is impossible to please God. According to Webster, and other standard lexicographers, the term may be variously applied, and the Scriptures speak of the faith of God, the faith of Christ, and faith of God's elect, and also of the faith of men, of devils, of living faith, and of dead faith. The Spirit of inspiration has through the apostles particularly described the origin, nature, power and vitality of the faith of the gospel, as faith that works by love and purifies the heart, which subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness made strong, waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the armies of the aliens, etc. From all that is said in the Scriptures of true, living and triumphing faith, we may infer that there is in the world a spurious, false, lifeless and deceptive faith, or what is called faith, and so received and regarded by the religious world. In the creation and operation of the faith of men and of devils, men and devils have much to do, and we

need only to sum up their own testimony to show that it is a creature of their own; indeed, it bears their image and their superscription. So indeed they seem to understand it, and to speak of it as something which is required of and to be produced by ungodly sinners, as a price or condition of salvation. As in their appeals to the unregenerate, they represent that however destitute sinners may be of faith, they can originate it if they will, and that, too, without much cost or labor. It has often been asserted by their preachers that it is as easily produced as for a man to turn his hand over. The very presentation of the appeal of our correspondent for our views affords evidence that the power of the creature to create faith, and when created to put it in motion and control its operation, is contended for by many, and it is well known to be a cardinal doctrine in every Arminian work-mongrel creed. Of that kind of faith it would be folly for us to deny the power of creatures to create and manage. The machinery of anti-christ is apparent to every intelligent observer. History points us to ecclesiastical councils, in solemn convocation from time to time, under the protection of human powers organized expressly for the purpose of making creeds, to be enforced by pains and penalties, flames and faggots, racks and tortures, upon the children of this world, and their humanly devised creeds are received by millions as saving faith. In modern times, and in our own country, the machinery for the manufacturing of faith and piety embrace infant schools, Sabbath Schools, Bible classes, catechisms, scientific lectures, Theological Seminaries, and even our public district schools are almost universally used for the same deceptive purposes. All these, beside the drilling, forging and blowing, so common at excitement meetings, anxious benches and other means-using appliances, are in requisition. The kind of faith engendered by the power and ingenuity of men, by whatever means, mode or machinery, like the idols of the ancients of which we read, is destitute of vitality. There is no breath in

the midst of it, unless it be the inspiration of delusion, fanaticism and will-worship, breathing slaughter against the cause and people of the living God. According to the solemn predictions of inspired wisdom the faith of anti-christ in the last days should be greatly facilitated by signs and lying wonders, and by all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness (II Thessalonians 2:11,12)." (See also Revelation 13:12-14.) But the faith of which we understand our friend to inquire is as distinct and opposite to the faith of men and devils as holiness is opposite to and distinct from sin, as heaven is from hell. No creature can have anything to do, or in other words, can do anything in its creation or its operation.

First. No creature can have anything to do in creating it, because we are expressly told in the sacred record that Christ is the author and the finisher of it. (Hebrews 12:2) This declaration leaves no room for creatures to operate in its creation. He who is the author is also the finisher. As in the creation of the world, God began and God finished the work, leaving no other beings room to claim that they had participated in its creation, so creatures are equally excluded from participation in the creation or production of the faith of the Son of God. He did not merely begin, and leave creatures to finish the work, for all his works are perfect, and that which is perfect cannot be improved. 1. Creatures, or created beings, are natural, all their powers and perceptions are natural, and must fail to comprehend or perform spiritual things; and faith is a spiritual and vital principle; it is therefore beyond the sphere of creature agency. All the faith that men can create is like themselves - natural. As a spider cannot spin a web from any material that it does not possess

in its own filthy bowels, so the faith produced by creatures is not in whole nor in part the faith of the Son of God. 2. The faith of the gospel is spiritual, for it is the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). All fruits of the Spirit must be spiritual. That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit (John 3:6); and the faith of the saints is born of God (I John 5:4); and it must therefore be spiritual, for being born of God, it must possess the life, power and immortality of God, and therefore is able to, and does overcome the world. 3. Creatures can have no part in the creation of the faith of Christ, nor can they even bring themselves into possession of it, or under its power, for the apostle positively declares that it is not of themselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8,9). 4. If it were the creature or production of men it would be the property of men, whereas the Scriptures declare that it is the faith of the Son of God. Galatians 2:20 says, "And the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Paul had not therefore had anything to do in its creation. Again, it is called the faith of God, (Romans 3:3) as it could not be called if it were of the creature.

The second inquiry submitted is, whether the creature can or does have anything to do with the operation of his faith? The answer to this, as well as the other inquiry, must depend on what is intended by "his faith." If the creature is a member of Christ, and, like Paul, living by the faith of the Son of God, then, as a member of the body of Christ, the faith of the Son of God is his faith, for of Christ's fullness has he received, and grace for grace, because Christ in all his fullness is given to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In this relation the faith of the Son of God, as the life, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of Christ, is his, and he is the author and finisher of his faith. As there is but

one Lord, so to the head and body of the church there is but one faith and one baptism, and the redeemed of the Lord shall all come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:5,13).

Having already shown that the faith of human origin must be operated by the power which gave it being, we shall now consider the inquiry to be concerning the operation of the faith of the Son of God, as existing in the children of God. To answer the question then requires that we consider, What is faith? And what are its operations? And by what power are they controlled? 1. The faith of which we now speak is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). It is that living principle in the quickened family of God which realizes and actualizes to them those spiritual things which no human power or discernment can comprehend, by which the saints "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (II Corinthians 4:18)." Even as Moses by faith endured as seeing him who is invisible (Hebrews 11:27). It is to the child of God what the eye is to the natural body. As our natural eye beholds natural objects which we could not see without the eye, so faith looks within the veil, beholds the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and makes real to us that which without vital faith would only be at the best a vain speculation. It is through faith that the Spirit reveals all spiritual things to the saints; while here we live by faith, we walk by faith and are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation; hence it is evidence of things not seen, things which the eye hath not seen, things which the vulture's eye hath not seen, which God hath hidden from the wise and prudent, but hath revealed to the faith of his children. 2. The operations of faith are confidence in God,

reliance on his counsel, wisdom, goodness and grace, perceptions of his power and glory, confident trust in his gracious promises, discoveries of his dealings, the revelation of Christ in all his Mediatorial fullness and glory, a clear apprehension of his truth, and of all things pertaining to his purpose and grace in the salvation of his people. Faith also in its operation suppresses fear, triumphs over doubts and infidelity, strengthens and confirms the Christian's hope, overcomes the world and all worldly powers and influences which war against the soul. It glories in the cross of Christ, it discovers and points out the pathway of holiness, directs to the throne of grace, inclines those who possess it to follow Christ in his ordinances, to obey him in all his precepts and makes them dearly love his service. It inspires courage to face the enemy, to endure hardness as good soldiers, to suffer the loss of all things and to count not their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy. The operations of faith are most gloriously exemplified in the cloud of witnesses presented in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, in the patriarchs, prophets and men of God, from the days of Abel until the apostolic age, and from that period the subjects of this holy faith have known and testified of the power and triumphs of faith over all the opposing powers of darkness in their lives and in their deaths. How often have some of us witnessed the powerful operation of faith making the dying bed of the saints feel softer than the downy pillow, in disarming death of all terror and the grave of victory, lighting up the otherwise dark, dreary and gloomy passage with immortal radiance and refulgent glory. These are what we understand to be some of the operations of the faith of the Son of God, as it operates in and upon the saints until they shall need to walk by faith no longer; until

"They shall see and hear and know,
All they desired or wish'd below,

And every power find sweet employ
In the eternal world of joy.”

3. The power which conducts the operations of faith must be at least as great as the faith and its operations are. As we have seen that this faith of the Son of God, which is born of God, overcomes the world, if we believe the testimony we cannot admit that the world has any power to control its operations. As there is a divine power in faith, as it is the faith of the Son of God, the faith of God, as well as the faith of God’s elect, it cannot be governed or controlled by any power out of itself. Even the Christian who has often felt its power, labors in vain to control its operations. God, its author, has ordained that it shall be tried, for the trial of it is precious, and shall result in its final victory and his declarative glory. The Christian would naturally desire to be always exulting in its victories, or rejoicing in its discoveries; dreads, but cannot prevent, the fiery ordeal by which it is to be tried. The Christian to whom God has given the precious faith of his dear Son, although he has no power to create or control it, yet has much to do with its operations; but let us understand, although he cannot govern its operations, he can and must be governed by it. *He cannot exercise faith,* but faith can exercise him. This much he has to do with the operation of faith: he has to feel it, to love it, to cherish it, to testify of it, to be led by it, to walk by it and to live by it. Yea, the children of God are called to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, and labor to suppress all their carnal corruptions of the flesh which are at war with it, by crucifying the old man with its affections and lusts, and when the powers of the flesh seem to prevail, and doubts, and fears, and darkness, and temptations make them tremble and faint, they then have something to do; they are constrained to cry out, in the full conviction of their own weakness and inability to exercise faith, Lord, increase my faith. Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief. Thus they

acknowledge God’s power in keeping them is through faith unto salvation.

In conclusion, we will give some discriminating marks by which the honest inquirer after truth, if God has given him an ear to hear, and a heart to understand the truth, may distinguish between the faith of the Son of God and that which can be produced by men. The true is born of God, and lives and abides with hope and charity in the hearts of God’s quickened children; the false is a bastard, and shall dwell in Ashdod (Zechariah 9:6). The true is a living or vital faith; the false is dead, or totally destitute of spiritual life. The true conquers the sinner, and prostrates him as a willing and joyful captive at the feet of Jesus; the false is conquered by the sinner, and wholly under his control and management. The true humbles its possessor before the majesty of the lord; the false inflates with pride and self-importance. The true is immediately from God; the false is from the devil. The true leads the child of God through great tribulations up to the paradise of God; the false leads down to the chambers of death. The true makes the penitent publican stand smiting on his breast; the false inclines the Pharisee to boast of his own works. True faith inclines the heart to listen to what God the Lord has said, to believe what God has said and to rely alone on what God has done for life and immortality. False faith leads men to reject the testimony of God, to trust to their own vain imaginations and rely upon their own works for acceptance with God. True faith works by love, and purifies the heart; false faith works by the carnal, depraved impulses of the mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. True faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God; false faith stands in the wisdom of men and in the power of darkness, of freewill and human agency. True faith relies on what God has done; false faith on what men intend to do. True faith looks for redemption, justification and acceptance with God,

through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, while false faith confides in human merit, self-righteousness and will-worship. True faith feeds on every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, while false faith thrives upon false doctrine, false philanthropy, false worship and feeds and fattens on its own flesh. The faith of the Son of God leads those to whom it is given to his church, his people, his ordinances, his precepts and his examples, but false faith leads men to seek the society which is more suited to their depraved taste, and which they find in the various branches or departments of Babylon. True faith purifies the heart, but false faith vitiates the heart, and fills it with envy, wrath, hatred, malice, revenge, murder, seditions, heresies and all that is vile and abominable.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 191 - 197

FALLEN ANGELS.

Our attention has been called to the subject of the "angels which kept not their first estate," &c., by brother Gaines, of Kentucky, who desires our views on Jude 6, and 2 Peter ii. 4. It is rather a thankless undertaking to set forth our views upon a subject on which we must necessarily come in collision with the long established opinions and deep-rooted traditions of others, among whom are to be found some friends for whose opinions and feelings we entertain sentiments of the greatest regard. When called upon, as in the present case, however, we feel bound to set before our readers such views as we have.

The celebrity of Milton's views, as given in his "Paradise Lost," has become almost universal. As few men of our age are found able to compete with that distinguished poet in eloquence of style or language, few have ventured the risk of their own popularity by offering a different view of the subject from that which he has given, while at the same time a child may easily detect and expose the fallacy of his reasonings concerning the angels. We have not been able to see, with Milton and others, either beauty or scriptural authority for the notion that the angels here spoken of were ever residents of that heaven above, where the saints are ultimately to rest, nor that they had an existence prior to that date in which God created the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them - to believe that they were once associated with those holy angels that sang the joyful anthems to the shepherds in Judea; nor to believe that in their creation they were created for or capacitated to enjoy the immediate presence of their Maker, or that he designed them for any other purpose than that which is and shall be fully accomplished in their case, to us seems to conflict seriously with divine revelation. Can we rationally suppose

that the place originally provided for one description of beings shall ultimately be occupied by another so essentially different, without relinquishing the doctrine of the immutability of God. Or, if the saints are finally to occupy a place originally designed for the devil and his angels, how can it be said in truth that the heavenly kingdom was prepared for the saints *before the foundation of the world,* when, according to Milton, it was not known that the place would be vacated until the world was founded, and the decree of bringing his Only Begotten into the world, and that all the angels should worship him? Again, would not the saints feel sad in prospect of being placed where angels could not stay? If a higher order of beings, holy, happy, and in a place where temptation and sin could not enter, and such beings as could have no predisposition to sin, did fall from that estate, and were cast over the battlements of glory, would not the poor lambs of Jesus, who have all their lifetime been tormented with temptation and struggling against inbred corruptions, have great cause to fear that they also might fall from the height of glory and sink at last among the damned? But lest we be tedious, we will leave the negative part of our subject, and give our opinion of the angels.

By the angels that kept not their first estate, we understand the children of the devil. Satan is called an angel, and sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light; and as far as we have been able to discover from revelation all the names by which he is known in the scriptures are applicable to his seed. Hence Satan is called "The old serpent, which is the devil and Satan," (Rev. xx. 2;) his children are also called "a generation of vipers," - Matt. iii. 7; also xxii. 33. So also is Satan called an angel, and in Rev. xii. 7, his children are also thus denominated: "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and *his angels.*"

The term *angel* also signifies *messenger,* and hence every emissary of Satan employed to disseminate heresy, to oppose the gospel of Christ; to afflict and persecute the children of God, are properly denominated *his angels.* It can be by no means difficult to perceive that the dragon and his angels, mentioned in Rev. xii., are designed to show the powers of darkness in array against the cause and church of Christ. Michael, the only archangel spoken of in the bible, is none other than Christ; his angels are those who are denominated "The remnant of her (the church's) seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." - Rev. xii. 17. Admitting then, as we are compelled to do, that the disciples of Christ, in this case, are his angels, it is perfectly plain that the opposite angels are those unto whom Christ said, "Ye are of your father, the devil." - John viii. 44. These two descriptions of angels, in our opinion, include the whole human family; the chosen generation, or that seed which Jesus saw when he poured out his soul unto death; a seed that should serve him, and that should be counted to him for a generation; these constitute the one family, and are all in time born of a spiritual birth, by the Holy Ghost, and when discipled in the ranks of the followers of the Lamb, are known as his angels, keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the other division are found all who are without, such as dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Rev. xxii. 15. These are called the seed of the serpent, (Gen. iii. 15,) a generation of vipers, &c.; and these are known as the dragon's angels. The angels spoken of by Peter and Jude, we understand to be such as were found in the family of national Israel, and were there known as false prophets, children of Belial, &c. Their *first estate,* confining the idea to those angels, was intermixed with the people of God under the legal covenant; here they had an habitation in Abraham's house, claiming him to their father, as when they came to

John's baptism, (Matt. iii.) and as they asserted and Christ admitted. John viii. 33-44. Both Peter and Jude, in the connection of our subject, are found exhorting their brethren to beware of false teachers, which admonition they enforce by the example of these angels; and then, going still further back, they mention the destruction of the old world, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, &c., the judgment of which our Lord had said was more tolerable than that which awaited Jerusalem and the other cities of Judea.

We shall be understood to believe that the first estate and *their own habitation* of these angels was in the worldly sanctuary under the ceremonial law. Here they had rights in common with the rest of Abraham's carnal seed, of which - they were not dispossessed until the breaking up of that dispensation. The manner of their leaving their own habitation and losing their first estate is very clearly illustrated in Rev. xii. It had long been foretold that the day would dawn on Israel, when the children of God should, in a clearer light, discern between those who served God and those that Served? him not; at length the voice of one crying in the wilderness is heard, the morning star sheds forth a glimmering light; the day-spring from on high visits the benighted Jews. The people that sat in darkness discovered a light; and our Lord says, that which maketh manifest is light. To their great amazement, There appeared a great wonder in heaven - a woman clothed in the sun, elevated above the moon, &c., by which we understand the church of Christ, emerging from Judaism, and brought, by John's preaching and baptism, to view in her connection with Christ, in to whose name John baptized them, and thus raised above that orb ordained to rule the night dispensation of the old covenant, whose borrowed rays were given through prophecy, types and figures, pointed forward to the day of our Lord Jesus. Above this moon the church was discovered in her connection with Christ her Sun, and eventually the

Head of the church, or woman crowned with a crown of twelve stars. The church now looking forth as the morning. Cant. vi. 10.

According to the similitude of the morning, from the appearing of John, who was the day star, or harbinger of the rising Sun, the light must increase; and as the light became more clear, other objects were also discovered. The seed of the woman is born, Christ appears in the flesh as the promised Messiah, or as the archangel Michael; the Prince, that standeth for the children of thy people. Dan. xii. 1. The same light that revealed the Redeemer coming out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, made manifest the dragon, as first personated by Herod, standing before the woman, for to devour the child as soon as it should be born. "And there was war in heaven." Not in the world of glory above, nor in the gospel church, but in that heaven where these things appeared, viz: Israel. Christ is now born, has taken his place at the head of his little flock at Jordan, where he was recognized by John and his disciples, as their head and ruler, their leader and king, by the descent of the Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father, who from his awful throne and majesty proclaims, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately after this revelation of the Son of God, Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil; and on this occasion the war broke out. Michael, the archangel, contended with the devil; the dispute was then, and has continued ever since to be, about the body of Moses, *i. e.,* the law. Here the great Captain of salvation leads on to battle, followed by his angels; the dragon also marshals his troops. "And the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." In view of this

glorious triumph Jesus said to his disciples, when they returned and said, "Lord, even devils are subject to us through thy name:" "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Nevertheless, rejoice not that devils are made subject to you, (or are cast down,) but rather that your names are written in heaven; that you were not included in the number of the vanquished." Here then is where the angels that sinned left their own habitation and their first estate. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," &c. In anticipation of this glorious victory, the prophet cries, "Awake, awake! put on thy strength, O Zion! - Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the daughters of the uncircumcised and the unclean." - Isa. lii. 1. "Therefore, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth and sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." - Rev. xii. 12. The vanquished legions of the old serpent are cast down, and are held under chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day. All the angels of Satan are thus bound in chains of darkness, and Jesus rejoiced in spirit that it was so, saying," I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Nor can all the Infant Schools, Sabbath or Theological Schools, Mission, Tract or even Bible Societies, with all their machinery, brake asunder these everlasting fetters of ignorance of spiritual things, to which the devil and his angels are doomed; nor can all the preaching, praying or exhortations, anxious benches or protracted meetings, conducted by men or angels, ever make one of these fallen angels wise unto

salvation; they are chained, and in fetters of darkness they must remain for ever. Those angels particularly alluded to by Peter and Jude, were in a special manner chained in darkness concerning the true Messiah, the spirituality of his kingdom, and particularly in regard to the fulfillment of those predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the judgment of that great and terrible day.

From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these faithful apostles as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables; (tracts, fictitious stories, dairymen's daughters, and the like,) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, and extravagant love for souls, &c.,) shall make merchandize of the saints; but the apostle adds, "Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

"But oh! their end, their dreadful end,
Thy sanctuary taught me so;
On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below."

Alexandria, D. C.,
January 15, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials of Gilbert Beebe
Volume 1, Pages 571-578

FALSE CHARGES

Winterset, Iowa, June 4, 1860.

Dear Brother Beebe: Brother A. Hood, of this place, put a letter into my hands which he had lately received from Elder N. Gifford, dated "Zionsville, Boone Co., Iowa, May 18th, 1860," in which he (the said Elder) writes as follows:

"We have some new doctrine preached here lately by Benjamin Jones and John F. Johnson and son. I would like to know if it has got as far west as Winterset. I can give you some of the points: They say that the church never was lost, nor defiled, nor contaminated with sin in any way. I have been told that we need not look to any of Adam's posterity for the church, for it was not there. They say that this Adam man is not changed in regeneration, neither in soul, spirit, body, mind or matter. Does not this sound strange, when compared with the gospel, or christian experience? I think it does, and I find no authority for it in the Bible; but we are in an age of progression. If the limits of a letter would admit, I would try to show some of the inconsistencies of this doctrine. Some tell us that Christ only died to redeem these bodies from the grave. As a matter of course, if we never was defiled or contaminated with sin, we need no redemption from it. But it is a pity when Old School Baptists will run into such error: but the leaders of this doctrine are Beebe, Dudley and company. Wilson cannot go the doctrine. I have only given you a sketch of it, &c., leaving it for you to meditate upon."

Brother Beebe, the above is a true copy, and I send it to you by request of my brethren, and we desire you to reply, either in the SIGNS, or by private letter to me, as your judgment may dictate.

Yours in defence of the truth,
BONHAM KESTER.

Reply: As our dear brother has been a subscriber and constant reader of the SIGNS for many years, it is not necessary for us to tell him at this late hour that our object in publishing, and the object of our subscribers in patronizing us, has been the general edification of the scattered family of God, the exhibition of the doctrine of God our Savior, and the defence of Bible truth, together with an unsparing exposure of error and delusion. When we embarked in the undertaking, we had not the vanity to flatter ourself that we could sail over a smooth, unruffled sea, if we kept steadily in view the object of our labor, and the pledge we gave our brethren in regard to the manner in which the SIGNS OF THE TIMES should be conducted; and now, after nearly thirty years experience in our vocation, we cannot say that we have been disappointed. It is true, we have had some opposition from quarters where we did not dream that it existed, and from some who once held up our hands and encouraged our heart in the prosecution of our labors, but such cases have been comparatively few, the sympathies and brotherly aid of the great mass of the old order of Baptists have been constantly with us, as will be inferred from the fact that in the face of all opposition our circulation has steadily increased every year, and is now larger than it has ever before been at the same season of the year since we issued our first number in 1832. If we have had some enemies, we have had many more true, warm-hearted friends, and what is still more blessed, we feel assured that the goodness and mercy of God have followed us and sustained us until the present hour. That we have given no occasion to our enemies to oppose us, or to our friends to censure us, we do not pretend; the very best of our labors have been poor and imperfect, but that our aim and design have been honest, and all our energies employed

with a design to the glory of God and the good of his cause, we hesitate not, in the presence and fear of God, to affirm.

As our brethren can witness, we have generally declined to notice the personal assaults which have been made upon us, as we prefer to fill our columns with matters of more interest to the children of God. We have preferred that our name should be cast out as evil, rather than to set up a defense of our person or motives, especially as our readers have a sufficient opportunity to know our views, our doctrine, by reference to the files of our paper for many years. When we have been charged with *new doctrines, heresies,* and plots for selfish purposes, we have felt glad that our brethren all over the United States *know* what are our sentiments. There is not, in the United States, a member of the Old School or Primitive Baptist order, whose views on all subjects connected with our faith and order, are better or more fully known than those of the humble editor of the *Signs of the Times.* Twenty-four times a year, during the existence of the present generation, we have been heard from, from the centre to the circumference of our country. Yet almost every year some self-conceited wise-acre has attempted to make it appear that we are an awful and dangerous heretic, and that the Old School Baptists have not the intelligence to know it. Assuming to know more than seven men that can render a reason, they have made themselves ridiculous by assuming more discrimination than the whole fraternity of the old order of Baptists. But we have lived to see scores of those conceited comets arise, flutter and decline to their original nothingness. With a consciousness that the precious cause of God and truth is in better and stronger hands than ours, we have nothing to fear from the bluster of those who have no other idea of rising but by attempting the destruction of those who to them are Mordecais in the gate.

But we intended to refer to the inquiries of Elder Kester. Of the Elder, N. Gifford, whose letter is copied above, we know but little, only what we learn by his letter. It is more than possible that the design of his *firebrand* was to bring him out of his obscurity into notice, but whatever were his motives, it can hardly be accredited to an honest concern for the truth of God; for had that been his feeling, he would not have attempted to exaggerate or misrepresent the views of such men as Elder Benjamin Jones, John F. Johnson, to say nothing of brother Johnson's son and ourself. The letter bears unmistakable evidence on its face of misrepresentation, and a design to prejudice the minds of brethren in a distant State, against brethren whose praise is in all the churches, as brethren who have spent their lives in their Master's service, who have grown old in their labors in the churches, and in whose character not a blemish can be found; men whose standing in the community as well as in the church of God, has been untarnished for more than half a century. When men sustaining the reputation of Benjamin Jones, John F. Johnson and Thomas P. Dudley, cannot, in the evening of their long and useful lives be spared the blighting breath of malignant jealousy and slander, we count it, as we doubt not our young brother, Elder Joseph Johnson, does, an honor to have our humbler names classified with theirs, even in bearing reproach and misrepresentation for the sake of the truth. We say the letter bears the evident marks on its face of insincerity and mischief. Had it been otherwise, instead of laboring to spread the report into a distant State, its writer would have sought an opportunity to labor as the gospel directs, to reclaim those veterans of the cross, if he had honestly believed them to be in error. But such labor, we venture to say, he has not taken. We know the brethren implicated too well to believe they have ever uttered the sentiments charged to them, but if they had been strangers to us, when we read that the heresies charged are propagated under the leadership of Beebe, Dudley and

company, (which we and all our readers know is false; utterly and unqualifiedly false) how can we believe the other part of his statement against those who are esteemed much better than ourself? Again, in uttering his slander he starts off with a mere inquiry, whether the "new doctrine" has got as far west as Winterset, Iowa? and then, instead of intimating that he desired an answer, closes by saying, "I have only given you a a sketch of it, &c., leaving it for you to meditate upon."

But to the points charged: "They say." Who says? Why Benjamin Jones, J. F. Johnson and son. What do they say? "They say that the church never was lost, nor defiled, nor contaminated with sin in any way." When? where? to whom did they say this? and who heard them say it? We do not believe a word of it; we defy Elder Gifford to prove that *they* ever said it. What object could they have for uttering any such sayings? Have they not been for many years preaching that Christ gave himself for the church, that he might redeem her and cleanse her from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works? No sane man would utter any such sayings, much less such men as are assailed and falsely thus charged. They never said it, they never believed it, nor were they ever led into it by Beebe, Dudley and company. We risk nothing in saying that each of the brethren thus implicated believe that the church of Christ was involved in sin, defiled and contaminated with transgression, iniquity and guilt, and that all who are redeemed with the blood of Christ, were by nature children of wrath, even as others, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; but the Lord hath laid on him [Christ] the iniquity of us all." What then must be the depravity of the man who, while professing christianity and holding the sacred office of Elder, can deliberately say, write and send out the declaration into a distant State, over his signature, that "They say that the church never was lost, nor defiled, nor contaminated with sin

in any way," and that Beebe, Dudley and company, are the leaders of this doctrine.

He also writes, "Some tell us that Christ only died to redeem these bodies from the grave." Who they are who have told Elder Gifford this, he does not say, but the impression is given that some of the brethren named Jones, Johnson, Beebe and Dudley, have told him so. But as this is not directly fixed on them or any of them, we wait for Elder Gifford to explain who has told him this. Certainly the brethren implicated hold no such doctrine. We constantly preach that Christ died to redeem his church from all iniquity, from the curse and dominion of the law, and to redeem them unto God with his blood.

Another direct charge is, "They say, (that is, Jones, Johnson, his son, and Beebe, Dudley and company say), "that this Adam man is not changed in regeneration, neither in soul, spirit, body, mind or matter." This also sounds to us like an exaggeration of the sentiment held by these brethren on the subject, and we doubt whether any of them have said this, in the manner expressed above. Some of them we know have never said any such thing, and therefore the above statement is untrue. The circular written by brother Dudley some years ago, on the christian warfare, holds the sentiment that christians in their present state possess a carnal, earthly nature, which is born of the flesh and is flesh, and that it is at war with holiness, and lusts against the spirit, and constitutes one party to the warfare, and that they also possess in them a spiritual, immortal life, which is born of God; born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. That the former carnal nature is in the Scripture denominated the *old man,* which christians are admonished to crucify with its affections and lusts, and that the life implanted in them by regeneration, which is not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of

the will of man, but of God, is called the *new man,* which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. These two men are directly opposite in their natures, elements and propensities, the one is born of the flesh, and the other is born of the Spirit; the one is unholy, the other cannot commit sin, because it is born of God. (1 John iii. 9.) These two men, which are found existing in every christian while in this earthly tabernacle are the combatants or parties in the christian warfare. If this be heresy, every christian on earth is an heretic, for not one can be found on earth who does not know and daily feel the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit; between the old man and the new man, between that in them which is born of the flesh and that which is born of the Spirit. Then where is the heresy that so much shocks the sensibilities of Elder Gifford? Is it an unpardonable sin to believe and preach that all that is unholy, impure, corruptible, depraved and at war with the Spirit in us, is born of the flesh, is earthly, sensual and devilish, and that whatever is found in us that is pure, holy, spiritual, godly, is born of the Spirit of God? Is this a new doctrine among Old School Baptists? Have we not been taught by the word and by the Spirit of our God that all that is in us opposed to holiness is from beneath, and that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning? Elder Dudley's views are before the public, in his own manner of expressing them, Elder Johnson's, also, and ours, and when Elder Gifford, or any other person desires to tell what "They say," all we ask is that our sentiments be presented in our own way of expressing them, and if they do not stand supported by the Scriptures, and by all christian experience, let them be rejected.

Now, in regard to the *change* effected in us by the new birth, we will only attempt to give our own views, which, so far as we are advised, are also the views of our persecuted,

slandered and traduced brethren. It is the view of the writer of this article that in our unregenerate state, or until born of the Spirit, all our nature is earthly, depraved, sinful, and that there is in us no fear of God, no desire after holiness; no love to God or love of holiness; that we are dead in sins, enemies to God by wicked works, and that we are totally ignorant of our deplorable state and condition. When men are called by grace, quickened by the Spirit, are made the subjects of a great and astonishing change, their views of God are radically changed, and they view him as they never viewed him before. His holiness, purity, goodness, justice and truth fill them with a reverence and awe that they were total strangers to before. They are astonished that so holy and righteous a God has suffered them to live so long in rebellion against him; a sense of his goodness leads them to repentance; they are overwhelmed with a sense of their own vileness, and they feel so guilty that it seems to them there is no way for even God to save them without an infringement of his eternal justice. When fully humbled before him under a sense of their vileness, and the justice of what appears to them to be their inevitable doom, and all hope of commending themselves to his favor is taken away, Christ is revealed to them as the hope of glory, his blood is applied to them by the Spirit, for the remission of their sins, and his righteousness as the grounds of their justification before God; the love of God is shed abroad in their hearts, a new song is put in their mouth, and they are made to rejoice in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory; old things are passed away and all things become new; the things which they before hated, they now love; the things which they before loved, they now hate; the Bible now opens to them with new beauty; the precious promises are applied to them; the church and people of God now appear lovely; the doctrine of salvation by grace, which they before hated, becomes food to their spirits; they love and desire to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, and to live in love and

fellowship with the people of God. This looks to us like a change. They have passed from death unto life, from darkness into marvelous light, and from prison into liberty. But this, although a very great and marvelous change, is not all. By virtue of this quickening operation of the Spirit, they begin, from the hour of their being made alive, to learn the difference between the two principles or natures which they find within them. They find a law in their members, (which they never found before they were born again) warring against the law of their mind. They feel the incessant warfare, and become more and more convinced that while with their mind (which is born of God) they serve the law of God, with their flesh (which is born of the flesh) they serve the law of sin. They find that they bear about with them a body of sin and death, and we are greatly mistaken if they do not become more and more convinced in their experience with Jones, Johnson and son, Beebe, Dudley and company, as well as with Paul and Peter, James and John, that all that is holy, heavenly and divine in them, is born of God, and that all that is earthly, sensual and devilish in them, is born of the flesh, and is flesh. We know not who Elder G. means by Wilson, whom he says "can't go the doctrine." We suppose he may allude to brother Wilson Thompson. If so, we think he does him great injustice, for the past files of our paper will show that his views of this subject accord with those entertained by us, while it is presumed that neither Elder W. Thompson, nor any other sane Old School Baptist, holds any such sentiments as Elder Gifford has charged upon the brethren named above.

We have written lengthily, and it may be thought with a degree of severity, on this subject, but not, we hope, with a resentful feeling; not to defend ourself, so much as to disabuse the minds of misinformed brethren in regard to the real position occupied by those whom we really esteem better than ourself.

Middletown, N.Y.
July 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 368 - 375

FALSE CHARGES AGAIN

Dear Brother Beebe: I reckon you scarcely remember my face; but I remember yours well. I had no idea of ever seeing you in the flesh, and when I met you and brother Leachman at the Pig River Association, I anticipated that I should hear something good from you: and I thank the Lord, I was not disappointed. You had come so far, and had contended for the same faith which was once delivered to the saints. And, "Did not my heart burn within me"? and I could not refrain from shedding tears, when you and brother Leachman were unfolding the rich fullness of the gospel. It was a feast of fat things. I was so feasted that I thought surely I should not hunger again soon. I firmly believe it was the gospel in its purity. It grieved me that I could not become personally acquainted with you. I have frequently felt, since that time, that I would write to you; but I feel that I am weak and incompetent. Brother Beebe, we little folks hate to expose our ignorance. But I hope we have been taught by the same Spirit.

If you will bear with me, and it will not be intruding, I wish to ask a few questions: First. I would like to have your views on the dying with Christ, lying in the grave with him, arising and ascending with him to glory, as there seems to be some contention on those points. See the number of the *Signs* of July 1, 1855 your reply to brother Howard, in which some brethren seem to think you glory as much in the death of the sinner as in the death of the saint. I understand you, that in the purpose and will of God, Christ is as much glorified in the one as in the other; if I am wrong, please correct me. Second. Your views also, whether Christ is a created being. I believe you are able to give your views satisfactorily. Please do so. Contention and strife among brethren, I abhor. We have been taking your paper several years, and I admit there

are some things which are mysterious to me, but according to my weak judgment your editorials are as sound, and unshaken, and firm, in accordance with the testimony as the Scriptures, as ever come from the lips of man. You always admit that you are liable to err, and you seem to evince the spirit of meekness, and a willingness to forgive. “If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” “Let brotherly love continue.” I desire that you may keep nothing back that is profitable to the saints. May the Lord be with you and bless your labors, grant you all the comforts of this life, support you in death, and finally receive you up to glory, is the sincere prayer of your

FRIEND

P. S. - I will send you a few extracts, copied from the *Signs of the Times,* by brother Dyer, and sent to another brother, requesting his views on the subject. We have the fourth number for 1856, but have not the other two. I take the liberty of sending the copy to you, and hope you will pardon me, for I do it in friendship. I thought as I was writing, and it is concerning the questions I have asked you, I would send it. There seems to be some contention among brethren about it. My way is, if a brother or sister expresses anything which I cannot see through, to go to them, not to some one else for an explanation. I fear some brethren are trying to take unfair grounds with your doctrine. As the brethren did not authorize me to send this to you, I hope you will not use my name. Brother Beebe, I believe there are many who would rejoice at your downfall. I am sorry to so inform you; but it is truth. May you long stand as a watchman on the walls of Zion, ever ready to obey your Master’s will.

A WELL WISHER.

"In the 17th volume of the *Signs,* for 1849, number 11, and page 87, he says: 'Christ, as the life and seminal head of his own church or body, dwelt in the bosom of the Father; was the begotten and the only begotten of the Father; and the begetting and setting up of the body of the head, was the begetting and setting of the body of which he is the head and life. And when that head was put to death in the flesh, the life of the body or church was taken away, and all her members were dead, so long as he lay in the grave, but when he was raised up, together with his dead body did all his members arise from death, and were quickened together with him.'

"In the same year, and in the same volume, number 16, page 121, he says: 'Though they have dealt so summarily with that portion of God's word, I will in candor answer the questions they put to me. The first is, whether the quickening and life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence? I answer, decidedly, Yes.'

"In the 4th number for the year 1856, he says: 'We do not believe that the Son of God is a created being, nor have we ever expressed an idea implying such belief."'

Reply: Among the hundreds of dear brethren and sisters whom we had the pleasure of meeting for the first time, at the Pig River Association, in August last, it would not be expected that we could distinctly recollect but few, but this one thing we shall not soon forget, that we were most affectionately greeted in love and christian fellowship by the whole assembly of the saints who all appeared to be truly of one heart and one spirit, joyfully mingling in the worship of our God and Savior. Of the multitude assembled, there was not a face that we had ever before to our knowledge seen, except that of brother Leachman, who accompanied us in our journey to visit them. Our preaching, imperfect as it certainly

was, seemed to be warmly received, and heartily indorsed by all the brethren and sisters, without one dissenting voice, and the preaching of the brethren of that vicinity was as cordially received and indorsed by us.

But we were admonished by faithful brethren, that the enemy was close upon our heels to scatter arrows, fire-brand and death, insinuating that we were abolitionists, arians, non-regenerationists, non-resurrectionists, and almost anything but what we profess to be. Being thus advised we were the more explicit in avowing our sentiments on all subjects on which we were assailed, and were happy to learn that our views on every point were in perfect harmony with the doctrine constantly proclaimed by the brethren of that section of the country, as well as in harmony with what has always distinguished the Old School Baptists from the days of John the Baptist.

Soon after our return, we were informed by a beloved brother, and highly esteemed minister of the Pig River Association, that we had been assailed by one of Zion's adversaries, and a rehash of the stereotyped slanders which had been so frequently made by our enemy, met, denied, and refuted by us, for years past, were reiterated and as boldly reaffirmed, as though they had never been contradicted by us, and garbled sentences collected from the files of the *Signs,* to fasten the base slanders upon us. Although we have so frequently replied to substantially the same questions many times within the last few years, we cheerfully re-assert our views on the subjects embraced in the inquiries of our correspondent, in the order in which they are stated:

First. "On the dying with Christ, lying in the grave with him, arising and ascending with him to glory." Or in other words, our views of the vital, or life union of Christ as the spiritual

Head, and his church as the mystical body of our Redeemer. That such was the indentity of spiritual, immortal and eternal life of the Head and body, that when the members of the body of Christ had in their earthly nature transgressed the law of God, under which we were created in the earthly Adam, and the law of God demanded that we should die. Christ, who is the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven, came into this world, and took on him the seed of Abraham; was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons, and in his own person laid down that life which the law required for our transgressions, suffered the very death which was due to his people, was delivered up to death for our offences, and raised from the dead for our justification. And thus were all his people "buried with him, by baptism into death," including as many and all who were baptized into Jesus Christ, they were baptized into his death. (Rom. vi. 3-4.) Also Col. ii. 11-14, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; buried WITH HIM in baptism, wherein also ye are risen WITH HIM, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he QUICKENED TOGETHER WITH HIM, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances," &c. "For the love of God constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead." - 2 Cor. v. 14. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us *together with Christ,* (by grace ye are saved,) and hath *raised us up together,*and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." - Eph. ii. 4-6. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." - Col. iii. 1. These passages embrace all that we know, all that we

believe, and all that we contend for, upon the subject of the first question proposed by our correspondent. If this amounts to heresy, we cannot see how the apostles of the Lamb can escape the charge, or what defence the Old Baptists can make for singing,

> "One in the tomb, one when he rose,
> One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
> One when in heaven he took his seat,
> While seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

If there ever was a period in time or eternity when Christ was not the Life of his church, when the church was not one with him, even as he is one with the Father, we desire that some one more enlightened than we, should tell us when and where it was. We have thought it safe to believe just what the Bible says on the subject. But if Paul must be denounced as an heretic for what he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to write, it will not be the first time he has been so charged. See Acts xxiv. 14.

Second. The second point suggested, is an article written by us on the doctrine of predestination, in answer to questions proposed by a brother Howard. We have reviewed the article, and can see nothing in it to recall. We certainly now believe, as we did in 1855, that the power, government and decrees of God extend to all beings, all things, and all events, and think we should feel quite miserable, were we compelled to believe otherwise. If to believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, be heresy, then Paul, as well as the humble editor of this paper, must lie under the imputation, for Paul has asserted it, Eph. i. 11. And with all our heart we do believe it.

Third. We are called on to say whether we believe that Christ is a created being. We answer, as we have often answered

the same interrogatory before, most emphatically, We do not. We never have either believed or asserted any such thing. We have often made the same protestation, but still there are some who persist in charging us with that belief, and without paying the least regard to our disavowal, have labored with indefatigable zeal to garble something from the past volumes of the *Signs* to prove either that they know better than we do what we believe, or that we are insincere and false in our protestations. We envy not the disposition of those who can make it their business from year to year to vainly endeavor to elevate themselves by scandalizing those who can find better business.

Fourth. Next comes the extracts, said to be copied from the past files of the *Signs.* The design of which seems to be to show that we have both affirmed and denied that we hold that Christ is a created being. Take the extracts as we wrote and published them, (and not as they have garbled and misquoted them,) and take them in their connection with the articles in which they are found, and we still indorse each of those which are copied from our own writings. But the one which charges us with saying in number 16 of volume 17, and page 121, that *"the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence,"* we positively deny that we ever wrote, published or indorsed that sentence, as our own. The words are contained in an article written by Elder Trott, in the volume, number and page referred to, and were written by him, in a controversy upon the precise meaning of the word *made as* applied to the "last Adam being *made a quickening Spirit."* It was not said by brother Trott that Christ was a created existence, for brother Trott has always contended, if we have understood him, that Christ is the self-existent God, one with the eternal Father. But in these passages, in which it is said, He is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, that the last Adam *was made* a quickening Spirit, that as such he is the beginning of

the creation of God, and firstborn among many brethren, whether the words *created* and *made* are in those and other passages synonymous was the point in controversy, as we understood it. But we have no recollection that we have ever even expressed an opinion in the affirmative, but upon mature deliberation we have repeatedly said in our published articles on the subject that we do not believe the term created is admissible in that place, especially if by creation we mean the origination of something that did not before exist, as in the creation of the world.

Is it not strange that the brother, in searching the old files of the *Signs* should entirely overlook, should find but one disclaimer, and then put the words of another writer into our mouth, in order to give it the appearance of a contradiction of ours? In all the other extracts he copies from us, (but not correctly in the first,) and then, in the second extract, writes, "*He says,* I will in all candor answer the question they put to me; the first is, whether the life-giving Spirit of God is a created existence? I answer decidedly, Yes." Did not the brother who copied these extracts know that in his use of the pronoun he, in "He says," that the writer of the other extracts would, according to the rules of our language, be the antecedent, and implicated as saying what *he* never said? Was this done through ignorance of the rules of our language, or was it done to convey the idea that the editor, who is charged with saying the other things, also said what is contained in that extract? Whatever caused him to make the misrepresentation, it is no less a misrepresentation and an untruth, for we never said it, we never thought it, and we have not been slow to disclaim it from time to time.

The extract purporting to be from volume 17, page 87, should read, if copied correctly, "Christ as the Life and seminal Head of his own church or body, dwelt in the bosom of the Father, was the begotten, and the only begotten of the

Father, and the begetting and setting up of that Head was the begetting and setting up of the body of which he is the Head and Life." Is there anything wrong in this? If he is not the seminal Head of his church, how are they his seed? (Psa. xxu. 30; Isa. liii. 10; Gal. iii. 29, and 1 Cor. xv. 4549.) Does he not dwell in the bosom of the Father? Read John i. 18. Was he the begotten and only begotten of the Father? See John i. 14. Was the Head and body both born of God? Read Heb. ii. 11. Or is it more scriptural to believe that the Head was set up without the body? When Christ died for his members, were they buried with him by baptism into death? if not, when were they so baptized? Were they, his members, quickened together with Christ, and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places, or not? If they were, what is wrong in the extract? And if they were not, why did the inspired Paul say they were? (Eph. ii. 6, and Col. iii. 1.) But we will copy the rest of the extract: "And when that Head was put to death in the flesh, the life of the body or church was taken away." We hope this is not heresy, seeing that it is Bible doctrine. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if Christ died for all, then were all dead." - 2 Cor. v. 14. And all her members were dead, so long as he remained in the grave, but when he was raised up, together with his dead body did they arise from death, and were quickened together with him.

Now we have given the whole of the first extract; it is nearly all of it in Bible language, and all that is not in the very words of Scripture may be wrong, as it is only the view entertained by one who is, to say the least, quite as likely to err in his judgment as any of his brethren are. Of course we do not intend to be understood that the children of God were literally dead while Christ was in the grave, for many of them were not born, but all who were redeemed by his blood were legally dead, the death to which they were sentenced was met and canceled, and when he arose from the dead he

raised up his church from sin, and death, and hell, so as to justify the express declaration, that “God hath us raised up with him.”

In conclusion, we hope our brethren will examine our views, and take what we have written as we have written it, and not run over the volume of the *Signs* for twenty-eight years to garble and detach passages, and by unfair, uncandid and unchristian constructions of our words, labor to make us an offender for a word, or even without a word by us, uttered to justify them.

We have been hunted like a partridge in the wilderness, for years, and we have been charged with the most awful heresies, but when our volumes are searched for years, we are glad that so little can be found to justify the charges, and we submit to our brethren whether anything has been found that when fairly construed can be refuted by the Scriptures.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 424 - 432

FEET WASHING

The letter from Brother Hargrove, which was commenced in our last number, and concluded in this number, presents his views, and probably the views of many very highly esteemed brethren on that subject. We have no disposition to offer any remarks on the subject at this time, only, as we presume that about all that can be suggested, pro or con, has been laid before our readers, we would prefer that the subject should now rest, for the present, at least. All parties, so far as we are informed, have agreed that they will not make a difference of our understanding of it, a bar of fellowship, but leave all free to answer the honest conviction of their own minds, in regard to its literal observance. We hope that no unkind feelings may be indulged by those who differ, seeing that the difference is confined to that subject, and does not, as we can perceive, effect any other item of the faith or practice of Old School Baptists.

Middletown, N.Y.,
December 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Page 301

FELLOWSHIP

In our last number we copied the Circular Letter of the Delaware Association, written by Elder E. Rittenhouse, on the subject of Gospel Fellowship. It is a well written article on that subject, and worthy of the serious consideration of all the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ. It contains many important suggestions, arguments, demonstrations, admonitions and exhortations which are of vital importance. In reperusing and admiring that letter we have been led to extend the consideration of the subject of fellowship to the numerous branches of the kingdom of our Redeemer. In the letter referred to, the fellowship of the saints, and that in their relation to the church, has been as fully treated upon as could well be in the limits of a Circular Letter, but it may be useful to consider the relation which exists among sister churches of the same faith and order. The entire kingdom of Christ, embracing as it does the whole mystical body, of which Christ is the Head, is known in the Scriptures as the general assembly and church of the firstborn. (Hebrews 12:23) And although some of the constituents of it are now in heaven, some on earth, and some yet unborn, she is a unit.

"The saints on earth, and all the dead,
But one communion make;
All join in Christ, the living Head,
And of his grace partake."

Paul says, "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. 4:4-6) The same relationship exists throughout the whole church of God, and all her branches, as that which exists between each branch

and its members. The union is vital, it is a union of life, and the life of this union is God himself; for he, as we have seen, is over all, through all and in all the branches and members. Christ is the life, and our life is hid with Christ in God. This spiritual and divine life is the foundation of fellowship, and constitutes each branch and each member the fellow of every other branch or member. Thus the smitten Shepherd is the fellow of the Lord of hosts. (Zech. 13:7) And through him our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (I John 1:3) It is therefore impossible to extend this fellowship, as shown in the Circular, beyond the body of Christ, to any foreign substance, however closely that substance may be attached by art or by nature. The christian is himself, while in the flesh, an illustration of this. He cannot fellowship his own depraved, wicked nature, which is so very closely connected with his spiritual identity, but has to crucify the old man with its affections and lusts. There is no kind of discipline he can apply that will bring his flesh and spirit into fellowship, for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other. Flesh is born of the flesh, and spirit is born of the Spirit - is born of God. The flesh has low, groveling and earthly propensities, appetites and desires, but the spirit loathes them, and only has heavenly, spiritual and holy aspirations. How then can there be any fellowship between parties so opposite and hostile? Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor the things of the Spirit of God. (See I Cor. 2:14; 15:50.) Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. “For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?” (II Cor. 6: 14, 15)

This gospel fellowship being based on immortal life in Christ, permeates all the branches or individual members of the church of God, because it cannot be separated or divided from Christ as its vitality. In this fellowship all who are born

of God are members of Christ. (I Cor. 12:27) “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.” (I Cor. 12:12-14)

If then every individual member is an integral part of the church of Christ, and every branch of the church of Christ is an integral part of the body of Christ, wherein do the several branches of the church of Christ differ in their relation to each other, as churches, from that of one member of the same church to a fellow-member of the same?

So far as fellowship is concerned, the several churches are but the several branches of the one church. Churches or branches may hold a kind of nominal connection together, without being animated by the same life, or joined together in the same judgment, but gospel fellowship cannot exist where this foundation for it is not found. The evidences required of an applicant for church fellowship are such as shall satisfy the church to whom such application is made that the applicant has passed from death unto life, and has received of God that life which alone can unite to the church. The fruits of this life are joy, peace, love, faith, etc., and when presented are satisfactory, and those who show them are welcomed, through the ordinance of baptism, into the church. This makes the baptized convert not only a member of the branch of the church into which he is received, but he is baptized into the whole body of Christ, and comes manifestly into the fellowship of all sister churches of the same faith and order. If this were not so, he would be required to be baptized in every branch of the church with whom he communes, or whose fellowship he desires to enjoy. If the church to which he has applied be a gospel

church, and in gospel order, and in that order has received and baptized him, he is no more a stranger or foreigner, but he is become a fellow-citizen with the saints, with all the saints of God, in heaven and on earth, and is of the household of faith, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the foundation and chief corner-stone. (Eph. 2:20,2 1) His fellowship is with the holy city, new Jerusalem, which came down from God out of heaven, and not merely of some part of it; it is in common with all the saints of God, and as a citizen he cannot be lawfully disfranchised, except by the same law of the city which is binding on all the citizens of the same commonwealth. His standing is upon the same one foundation which bears up all the building, and it being the foundation of the apostles and prophets, no delinquency on his part, or action on the part of the church, can deprive him of the fellowship of the saints, that would not, were the circumstances otherwise alike, expel from fellowship the apostles and prophets. When a church is in gospel order, and in the Spirit, and according to the laws of Christ, receives into or expels from fellowship, what is thus loosed in earth we believed is loosed also in heaven; whatsoever she binds on earth is also bound or approved in heaven.

Much is said of the independence of churches; but let us tread softly here. In what sense, and to what extent, are churches independent? These are very important inquiries. We believe she is, when considered in her indissoluble union with her divine Head, and acting under his law, according to its letter and spirit, independent of the world, the flesh and the devil. She is independent of popes, cardinals, friars, of kings and potentates of the earth, and of ecclesiastical courts, councils and dictators of all sorts and kinds. But is she independent of Christ and of his laws? Has she any right to transcend or to transgress any of them? Has she a right to do wrong, or to transact a particle of business, either in

receiving, governing or excluding her members, without a warrant from the law of Christ? Nor is any branch of the church, as we understand this subject, any more independent of her sister churches than one member is of the other members of the same church. Can one church say to another church, We have no need of thee? “For the body is not one member, but many. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.” (I Cor. 12:14,18-21)

The saints and the churches are not only members of the one body of Christ, but they are members one of another; so that they can no more be independent of each other than they can be independent of the body. Remember, God hath set the members in the body as it hath pleased him. It hath, therefore, pleased God that the members of the body shall be mutually dependent one on another. The hands and feet and all other members are dependent on the eye to see, the eye dependent on the ear to hear, the feet to walk, and the hands to do what the other members are not qualified to do; but all these gifts belong to the church, and all are for the edifying of the body of Christ. That the whole body may travel, it is indispensably necessary that there shall be harmony in all the members, each duly appreciating the importance of all the rest. The perfect harmony and symmetry of the body has been clearly set forth in the Circular alluded to, but we wish to apply the same idea to the whole Zion of God, which is in her gospel order the perfection of beauty. No branch of the church of God is or can be independent of all the other parts. No member of the whole body detached from the body can independently subsist. How would an eye, an ear, or a hand or foot, see, hear, labor or

walk independently of its union and fellowship with the whole body? Separated from the body, they cease not only to perform their functions for the common benefit of all the body, but in their disconnection they cease to participate in the vitality of the body, and therefore perish. ‘Where two or three,” saith the Savior, “are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst.” Ten thousand may voluntarily assemble together of their own accord, without being gathered together in his name. However large or small the gathering may be, the essential points are that it is in his name, by his authority, and that Christ himself is the grand centre of attraction; that he, as their Life, gives vitality, by his laws, as their rule of government, and by his Spirit, having a desire to walk in all his ordinances, of one accord, of one mind, of one spirit, and all in one hope of their calling. Such is the church of God.

We are led to examine this subject from a consideration that a wrong impression has prevailed to some extent in regard to the independence of churches. The impression seems to be entertained, at least by some, that each branch of the church of God is invested with a right to act for itself in all matters of faith and practice, without reference to the approval or disapproval of the other branches of the same church. If this impression be correct, where is the Scripture to sustain it? How is fellowship to be maintained on that principle? The church of Christ in all her departments must be of one mind, of one heart and of one judgment, or their professed fellowship for each other is deceptive and hypocritical. If all the churches, as we call them, meaning the branches of the one undivided church of God, are led by the one Spirit, ruled by the same law of Christ, and joined in the same judgment, all the acts of each will be the acts of the whole. This will, we conceive, apply to the reception, government and exclusion of members. But if some churches hold themselves so independent of the others that they do not desire or respect

the concurrence of their sister churches in their action, the one may receive members, and such members be denied fellowship and communion with sister churches, or they may expel members, and the expelled members still be held in full fellowship with the other churches; but how then can all be called sister churches, of the same faith and order? Whatever faith they may profess to hold, their order is far from being the same.

To avoid such confusion and irregularity it has been the practice of the churches of the same faith to maintain a correspondence with each other, through associations, conferences and other meetings, and by dismissing and receiving members by letter, and such other friendly correspondence as may be convenient from time to time. And when difficulties arise in which there is an important diversity of judgment among the members of one church, which involves a question of the common order of the house of God, if such church desires to maintain the union and confidence of her sister churches, it has been our practice to say to them, "Come and behold our order." Or to call on them to send approval and faithful brethren to aid the church in the adjustment of her difficulties. Whenever churches decline this course, and refuse to be advised, or to exhibit their order to their sister churches, suspicion is excited that something is wrong, and will not bear investigation without exposing disorder. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." (John 3:20,21)

Middletown, N.Y.,
July 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 216 – 221

THE FINAL JUDGMENT.

WHILE preaching at the Delaware Association last May, we expressed our dissent from the popular view, that the glorified spirits which now surround the radiant throne of God, would, after the resurrection of the bodies of the saints and the dissolution of this material world, be called from their lofty mansions in the heavens, to undergo a fearful examination, in order to ascertain whether they were destined for heaven or hell; or that such as are now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, will require to be put on trial, either to dissipate doubts on their own minds, or to convince their soverign Judge in regard to where they belong. Unable as we were at that time to express our mind fully upon the subject, we were not surprised that some of our brethren desired a more full explanation of our views. Regarding this as their right, we felt a pleasure in promising to explain what were our views, through the "*Signs of the Times*," especially as what we said on that occasion was not fully understood. Our frequent absence from home since we returned from Delaware, has prevented our giving earlier attention to the subject; nor shall we do much more even now, than to open the way for a friendly discussion of this subject.

Upon all subjects involving the contemplation of time and eternity, such is the weakness of human capacity, that we are apt to confound the one with the other in inexplicable jargon, and then leave the subject as a profound mystery. By some means, either by divine revelation, (as many believe) or by tradition, (as we are rather inclined to suspect) the notion is prevalent that the final destiny of mankind will not be known until after the end of time; that prior to such knowledge, these etherial heavens and this terrestrial globe shall be wrapt in annihilating conflagration, and cease to be. At that time, it is supposed, the assembled race of Adam shall be

summoned to attend the grand assize in one promiscuous mass; when Christ, the Judge of quick and dead, shall robe himself in garments of dreadful majesty, ascend the throne of final decision, and then proceed to the examination of mankind; each in his turn to be examined, and then, as his case may be, take his place at the right hand or left. If these views are correct, are we not from necessity driven to the conclusion that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, all the patriarchs and prophets, the thief that went with his Redeemer to paradise, the apostles, and all the primitive saints, must at that dread day vacate the sphere of their divine, employment, and stand with trembling and dire anxiety before the dread tribunal? How many of the dear lambs of the flock of Jesus have trembled at the thought of being finally unable to make a good and sufficient apology for every deed done in their bodies. That there are passages of scripture which, in the manner we have generally, heard them expounded, would go far to establish such conclusions, we are not about to deny; but whether these scriptures have been rightly understood, and their testimony properly brought to bear upon this subject, we wish with due caution to examine.

As this article is only designed to present the outline of the investigation before us, we will notice a few things for. the consideration of our brethren, and leave them to reflect until a further opportunity shall be afforded to pursue the investigation.

Subject to the correction of brethren who have clearer views on this subject than we, we shall for the present assume the position, that on the part of God, all his works were known unto him from the foundation of the world; that the disclosures of time or eternity can add nothing to his certain knowledge of beings or things; that in his all wise and gracious purpose, every provision of grace was made that

can possibly be requisite infallibly to secure the perfect safety of all the saints; and that he having predestinated them to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, and having made them accepted in the Beloved, has as perfect knowledge of who they are, where they are, and to what they are destined, as he will have when all his saints shall sing the eternal anthem in the highest heavens. If this position can be established by the unerring word of truth, then the notion that arminian preachers, meeting-house walls, graveyards, &c., will be called on at some future judgment day to witness in the case of each individual of mankind, is a fallacious delusion.

We apprehend no difficulty in proving to the satisfaction of all consistent Old School Baptists, that God has chosen, predestinated, and effectually secured the salvation of all that will be eventually saved; so that no possible contingency can ever add to, or diminish from the number; and that their names were enrolled in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world. And it is certainly worthy of remark, that two important events have demonstrated the utter impossibility of overturning the counsel of God upon this subject. The events to which we allude are, one, the introduction of sin into the world; the other, the powers of earth and hell combined in the tragedy of Mt. Calvary; but in both, the Lord has triumphed most gloriously. Of the first, the poet has justly said:

"Here Satan was non-pluss'd in what he had done;
The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run;
In streams of salvation that never run dry,
And all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

That mighty blow aimed to prostrate all our hopes, to blast forever all well grounded expectation of immortality, was overruled by the omnipotent arm of God, to further, instead

of hinder the accomplishment of Jehovah's immutable designs. In the crucifixion .of our immaculate Redeemer, although it was emphatically their hour and the power of darkness, yet they could do only what God's hand and counsel had before determined should be done. We might also consider the violence and deadly opposition that has always been manifested towards the people of God in all ages of the world; yet not one of the stakes of Zion has ever been removed, nor has any of her cords been broken. Still Zion stands, like the pillars of Jehovah's throne, unshaken; and from age to age defying the storms of human wrath, the rage of men and devils. The election of grace is this day precisely what it always was, and what it shall ever continue to be. Upon the other hand, thousands of men and millions of money are annually employed to swell the number of those who shall be saved; yet, although they may make many proselytes, by land and by sea, they will find it much easier at last to wash out the color of the Ethiopian, and change the Spots of the fierce leopard, than to enlarge the society of the world of glory.

If it be admitted that the number of the redeemed of the Lord is immutably fixed and unalterably decreed, how can we consistently suppose that there remains any uncertainty requiring a final decision. when time shall be no more?

That the elect of God, in their connection with Adam, became involved in his transgression, and were by the law doomed to wrath and condemnation, is a truth that appears on the pages of holy writ; but so far as the law of God is concerned, they have been brought to judgment; all the accumulated guilt of all the family of God, from the creation of the world till the great burning day, has been weighed in the balance, and the exact amount required at the hand of our adorable Head and legal representative; by him the debt was canceled, and Sinai has ceased to thunder. This was a

judgment day indeed, when Jesus bore our griefs, carried our sorrow, and the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him. But glory to God in the highest, by his stripes we are healed.

But it is contended, that Jesus himself is appointed the Judge of quick and dead; and that the destiny of all beings and all worlds hangs on his sovereign decision. To this divine truth we most cheerfully subscribe; and we do rejoice that all power in earth and heaven is vested in his hand; that his judgment is final, decisive, and from it there is no appeal; but does it necessarily follow that his judgment must be delayed until the heavens shall be no more? By no means. When he had satisfied all the requisitions of the law, had done and suffered all that was written of him in the prophets and in the psalms, when he came triumphantly forth from the tomb, having led our captivity captive, he was proclaimed the blessed and only potentate, the King of kings and the Lord of lords; and having thence ascended to his Father to receive a kingdom, he was divinely recognized in that office; and he who had but so recently stood to be judged at Pilate's bar, was now proclaimed the sovereign Judge of quick and dead. For unto the Son, God said: Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." He went up with a shout, even with the sound of a trumpet. He went to receive a kingdom, leaving with the saints the kind assurance that he would come to them again; that he would associate his little flock with him in that kingdom; for he had redeemed them, and made them kings and priests unto God, and they. should reign with him forever. Nor did he leave them comfortless; he told them it was needful for them that he should go away; but he would return before some of them should see death; and also what should be the sign of his coming; nor was that coming, nor those signs to be deferred until the end of time, as many have vainly imagined; but it should take place when he

should descend with a shout, as he went up, and come to be admired by all who waited for his appearing; but to take vengeance on the Jews, to break up and forever abolish the temple worship, destroy his enemies by the spirit of his mouth, and consume them by the brightness of his appearing. On that great and terrible day of the Lord, should appear the sign of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven; and then would he send his angels (or ministers) with the great sound of a trumpet, (the gospel) to gather together his elect; and then, having effectually abolished the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, he should sit upon his throne, and the twelve apostles that had followed him in the regeneration, should sit with him on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Then, at that very time, should all the nations of the earth be gathered before him; and he would separate them the one (nation) from the other, (nation) as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left, and say to the former, Come ye blessed; .and to the latter, Depart ye cursed.

This judgment day was ushured in about eighteen hundred years ago; and the division of the sheep of Christ from the goats has been progressing from time to time to the present, and will still progress, until every ransomed soul is effectually brought to occupy his place at the right hand of Jesus, and all the goats are placed with the accursed at his left hand. The very ministration of Jesus is in every expression carrying forward this work of judgment; his gospel echoes forth the sound, Come ye blessed; and is drawing the line between ;the precious and the vile, bidding every goat depart.

If Jesus our Lord did not assume his judgment seat when he came in the execution of these long predicted judgments on Jerusalem, in what capacity did he pour out the vials of

divine wrath on that important occasion? His judgment in this case was rendered, viz: that all the blood of his servants that had been shed from the days of Abel, should be required of that generation, and that their judgment day should be more fearful than was that of Sodom and Gomorrah.

But it was foretold by prophets, that he should judge his people. In relation to them, he judges between them and all the other kindreds of the earth. "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." He putteth them forth and goeth before them, &c. In the execution of this judgment, the experience of all the saints shall witness, When God speaks life to them, they rise from the state of death in trespasses and sins, and forthwith are brought into judgment. The awful throne appears, and they are arraigned; the mountains of their guilt are set in order before them; the law of God in flaming precepts, which they have violated, bears startling testimony against them; its sentence of death and damnation is thundered forth, and they confess the judgment, and sink in deep despair. In this their experience they are brought to see the law fulfilled, justice amply satisfied, and their souls redeemed by Jesus Christ their Lord. They see that he who bore their sins in his body on the tree, sank down beneath their weight in death, has risen indeed, and has ascended the throne of state, received his kingdom presides as judge supreme on his holy hill Zion, and from his mouth they hear the joyful decision: "Thy sins are forgiven." Far as the east is from the west, they are removed: the new covenant is presented; the law of Christ is written in their hearts, engraved on their minds; he will be their God and they shall be his people; he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities he will remember no more. Now we conclude this judgment is conclusive and final, and the truth of God is pledged that their sins shall be remembered no more. Is it not inconsistent

then for us to suppose we shall have to account for them all after the general resurrection of the dead.

That there is a day appointed when God will raise the bodies of all his saints, we fully believe; but not to try them, whether they be his or not: for they shall rise first; and their very appearing before the resurrection of the ungodly, will fully determine that they are his; they shall meet him in the air, and so shall be forever with the Lord. When they arise from their graves they shall come forth arrayed in immortality and incorruption, with bodies made like the body of their glorious Lord - not to be judged, but to shine in the radiant glory of Christ eternally. After the resurrection of the saints the wicked shall also be raised to a resurrection of damnation; for this is the decision of their righteous Judge, pronounced on them more than eighteen hundred years ago; and their resurrection and damnation will be but the execution of their sentence, as already passed upon them; for they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them, and their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

From what we have written, the reader will understand us to believe that when Jesus calls a sinner from death to life, and gives him the assurance that his sins are forgiven, those sins shall be no more remembered; that the soul thus delivered shall no more be brought into condemnation; he is freely justified by grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and this judgment is final and eternal; and in his resurrection he will only receive what is awarded in the judgment already rendered; that the wicked, dying in his sins, is already judged, and his sentence irrevokably pronounced by the sovereign Judge, so that when he ariseth at the last day he shall receive precisely according to the decision already made. We have not to wait until the heavens be no more, to learn our final destiny. If washed in the blood

of Christ, arrayed in his righteousness, we are saved; if otherwise, we are lost, irretrievably lost, eternally lost!

We have extended this article beyond what we designed; but still there are several things connected with this subject that will require attention hereafter, among which several passages of scripture which have been supposed to establish the popular doctrine of judgment deferred &c. We wish not to impose our views on any brother, but having been called on, we frankly present them, and shall gladly hear from brethren on this subject.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
July 15, 1841.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 691 - 698

“FIRST TRUSTED IN CHRIST.”

“THAT we should be to the praise of His glory who first trusted in Christ.” - Ephesians i. 12.

BROTHER BUTTS has called on us to give our views upon the the above passage; and particularly as to who first trusted in Christ. We are aware that it is the opinion of some brethren that Paul designed to be understood that we should be to the praise of the glory of God, and that God the Father was the first that trusted in Christ. That the whole responsibility of redemption was rested upon and sustained by Christ as the head of the church, and that too before any of His elect were brought experimentally to trust in Him, is a most glorious and heart cheering truth, and that the whole economy of grace shall eventually redound to the praise of the glory of God is equally certain and cheering to saints who cease not to cry, “Not unto us, Not unto us, O God; but unto thy name give all the glory.” Nevertheless the meaning of the text at the head of these remarks is in our opinion obviously to show that *we,* viz: *the primitive saints,* who were the first that trusted in Christ after His revelation in the flesh, and that their experience was ordained to the praise of God’s glory. In this chapter the inspired apostle shows that the whole church was chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinated to the adoption of children and all to the praise of the glory of God’s grace, wherein he hath made us acceptable in the beloved. The purpose of that grace is also considered - viz: “That in the fullness of the dispensation of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ. That all who were thus chosen in Him had a spiritual life given and secured to them in Him before all time, should in time, be brought experimentally into union with the mystical body of Christ, and enjoyment of that divine inheritance of life and glory mentioned in the preceding verse. “In whom

we have received an inheritance, being predestinated," &c. But who had at that time received their inheritance experimentally upon the principle of this divine purpose and grace given them in Christ Jesus before the world was? Certainly the apostles and primitive church. The manifest reception of their inheritance brought them to trust in Christ, as a kind of first fruits unto God. These were therefore the first who in the sense of the subject, had trusted in Christ. The above views are evidently sustained by the subjoined remark of the apostle: In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard, &c. While Hebrew disciples were the first brought in to the gospel kingdom, these Ephesian Gentiles were afterwards brought into the enjoyment of the same inheritance. Even as this gospel was to be preached into all the world, beginning at Jerusalem, "To the Jews first, then also to the Gentiles and all, that the redeemed family may be to the praise of God's glory, by being made holy and without blame before Him in love.

Indeed the whole connection is in harmony with the view we have taken of the text. After having shown that the trust and confidence of the first disciples were to them an inheritance based upon and proceeding from their being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestinated to the adoption of children; upon their revelation as children, is made manifest their heirship to the inheritance by which they were brought to trust in Christ. Also the experience of these Ephesians, after they had heard the word of life, the gospel of their salvation, and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, was an earnest of their inheritance; not the procuring cause of it, but the earnest or evidence of it, until the redemption of all the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. Wherefore, says the apostle, I also, after I heard of your faith (or trust) in the Lord. Jesus Christ, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks, making mention of you in my prayers.

The doctrine of the gospel, although in the opinion of arminians tending to licentiousness, to all who are brought to trust in Christ, exerts an influence on their life and conversation, bringing them into conformity to the divine image. Who that has thus received their inheritance as set forth in This chapter, that does not find his heart and soul drawn out with Paul, after holiness, with ardent desire to bear the image of that blessed Savior through whom they are made acceptable.

"Such beauties in my Savior shine,
I would transcribe and make them mine."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
April 15, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 608 – 610

FLESH AND SPIRITS.

The scriptures speak of all the human family as of one common earthy origin. All are and were created in the first man Adam, of whom Paul testifies that he is of the earth, earthy; also that he was made a living soul, that he was not spiritual, (in the sense in which the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, is,) but he was natural. Although he possessed the spirit of a man, yet it was a natural spirit, or a spirit adapted to his being as a natural man. But when sin had entered into the world by his offence, he, with all his posterity, were involved in his transgression; all became alike depraved, guilty and condemned to die. Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. In our relation to the earthy Adam there is no distinction; all are alike, so far as that relation extends; all are natural men, depraved, fallen, helpless sinners, under the sentence of death. And as death passed on all men in Adam before any of his posterity were born, the mortality of all is alike inevitable, and none are or can be exempt from the irrevocable sentence, which remands our bodies to the dust of which they were formed, and our spirit (natural spirit) to the God who gave it. So far, then, as the relation of the human family to the earthy Adam is considered, there is no difference; God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." If there is any difference in the nature of mankind in their relation to or connection with the earthy Adam, we know not where to find it. Paul says, "As is the earthy [Adam], such are they also that are earthy." – 1 Cor. xv. 48. And in Romans iii. 9 and Ephesians ii. 2 the same apostle testifies that we all (both elect and non-elect) are by nature the children of wrath, even as others; and that all those which were in Rome, called to be saints, are in their nature in no wise better than those whose damnation is just.

All the children of Adam are in their nature alike, and are called natural men, to the full extent of their relationship to him in whom they have received their fleshly or earthly being; and as the stream can rise no higher than its fountain, nothing can be developed by or from Adam that was not in him, nor can the natural man produce any element either good or bad that does not belong to his nature. And therefore, although it is certain that god has chosen out of the tribes of mankind a people unto salvation, and that chosen people are redeemed from sin, death and hell by the precious blood of Christ, and that he has predestinated them to be conformed to the image of his Son, and ultimately to bear his image, and to be clothed in his immortality in their final resurrection from the dead, still they must experience that death to which all natural men are condemned in that natural men are condemned in that Adam in whom all have sinned and all die. Hence it is said of the natural man, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body; but it shall be changed in the resurrection from a natural to a spiritual body, and be fashioned like Christ's glorious body, but not until this mortal shall put on immortality. And this is testified of the saints, whose mortality shall pursue them to their graves, and only leave them when raised in spiritual, immortal and glorious bodies, when death shall be swallowed up of life and immortality.

Hence it is that God's chosen people, who are redeemed from sin, death and hell by the blood of Christ, and predestinated to the adoption of children, after they have been born of the flesh, and fully manifested as natural men in the flesh, must be born again, of the Spirit, before they can see or enjoy the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, not of this world, and the things of the kingdom of God are spiritual things, as righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and "the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they

are spiritually discerned." Before we were born of the flesh as natural men, we could see or know nothing of the things of nature; a birth of the flesh was necessary and indispensable to qualify us to see and enjoy the things of the natural world, and it is equally indispensable that we should be born again to qualify us to see or receive the things that are spiritual. As a birth of the flesh brought us forth in our flesh as natural men, so *we* must be born again, of the Spirit, to make us manifest as the children of God. The same chosen and redeemed people who have been born of the flesh must be born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. These two births are distinct and dissimilar. The first is of a corruptible or natural seed, which is natural and corruptible like its earthly progenitor; the second birth is spiritual, and of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and the life which is produced by this incorruptible seed is spiritual, incorruptible and immortal. The natural man, which is born of the flesh, is not by the new birth changed from a natural man to a spiritual man, for it is to be sown a natural body in death, and raised a spiritual body in its resurrection; but not till this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, can this change take place. It is true that in the new birth Christ, who is our life, is formed in us the hope of glory; but it is also true that "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you," (it does not read, If your mortal body has become the Spirit that raised up Jesus; but if that Spirit dwells in you, if indeed you have this treasure in your earthen vessels, and your bodies have become the consecrated temples in which God by his spirit dwells, then) "he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you." Your mortal bodies are not yet quickened by the Spirit. They are still the bodies of this death which made Paul a wretched

man, and a captive to the law of sin which was still in his members, even a long time after God had revealed his Son in him. And he says, "But ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." – Rom. vii. 23, 24; viii. 10, 11, 23.

Much has been said by some whose motives are open to the scrutiny of the all-seeing eye of the eternal Judge, by way of stigmatizing us as holding what has been called the Parkerite two seed doctrine. We have uniformly repelled the charge as being untrue; but while we ignore the peculiar views of Elder D. Parker, we firmly believe in the bible doctrine of all the seeds which are set forth in the sacred scriptures. We believe there is an incorruptible seed, by which the sons of God are born, and which Jesus saw when he poured out his soul unto death, and that seed shall be counted to the Lord for a generation. And we are bound also to believe, from the same testimony, that there is a seed of evil doers upon the earth, who are called a generation of vipers, and are said to be of their father the devil. But in neither case do we understand or believe there is any distinction expressed or implied between them in reference to what they are as the children of the flesh, or as natural descendants of the earthly Adam. We have in the preceding part of this article shown, and proved most conclusively, that all the chosen and redeemed people of God are by nature the children of wrath, even as others, so that it is not nor can it be in their earthly nature, that any are identified either as the seed of the serpent or as the seed of Christ. In our earthly nature we do not differ, nor are the elect people of God in any wise better than those who are denounced as the children of the devil. Cain was a legitimate son of Adam, but he is said to be of that wicked one who was a murderer from the beginning, who, when he speaketh a lie, speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it. When our Lord told the persecuting Jews that

they were of their father the devil, he said also that he knew that they were the seed of Abraham. Their fleshly descent from Abraham's loins neither constituted them the children of God nor the children of the devil; but the spirit by which they were governed gave evidence of the paternity of the spirit by which they are characterized, and of the state they were in. The apostle John says, "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." – 1 John iii. 8-10

To our mind the apostle is not speaking of our fleshly nature s being born of God and of incorruptible seed, which being born of God cannot commit sin, for notwithstanding Paul's spiritual birth, he found sin dwelling in his fleshly members; neither do we understand him to say or mean that our natural birth of the flesh is that which constitutes us the children of the devil, for those whom he calls the children of God, and those whom he calls the children of the devil, are perfectly alike in their fleshly birth. But that which he personifies as a child or son of God is that which is born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of the spirit of God; for as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons or children of God, and his spirit in them testifies that they are born of God. And the flesh, which is born of the flesh, and in which, even after the new birth, there dwelleth no good thing, still wars against the spirit which is given them of God, so that the christian, who has his present complex being, is manifested in his birth of the flesh as a child of Adam, and in his spiritual birth as a child of God, and possesses, so long as he continues in the flesh, an earthly,

carnal nature, which is born of the flesh, and also a spiritual life, which is born of God.

So, on the other hand, those who are manifest as the children of the devil, differ not in their natural birth of the flesh from all others of mankind; but they are manifested as children of the devil by the indwelling of the spirit of the devil. He, or that spirit in the children of men that committeth sin, is of the devil. He, or that spirit in the children of men that committeth sin, is of the devil. The seeds of sin were sown in the beginning by "the old serpent, which is the devil and Satan." He allured or beguiled the maternal parent of our race to lust after the fruit which God had forbidden. "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." – James i. 15. The spirit of wickedness, of falsehood, of murder, and of all opposition to God and to holiness, is of the devil, and is what constitutes the relationship of which John is speaking. The spirits which are in opposition to God, to truth and to holiness, are of Satan, and therefore John admonishes the saints to "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God;" and he informs us by what standard to try them, and how we are to know them. The spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God; the spirit whom the world cannot receive, nor see, nor know, is of God; the spirit of truth and holiness, of love, and of a sound mind; the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father; the spirit of humility, of meekness; the spirit which in the christian wars against the flesh, crucifies the old man with its affections and lusts; the spirit of grace and supplication, which helps our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God; all these are of God, and all who posses and are led by them are born of God, and are the sons of God and heirs of immortality. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but het spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are

freely given us of God. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, because they are spiritual discerned. "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." – 1 Cor. ii. 12-15.

"As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" for none can receive or be led by the spirit of God in any other way but by being born of God. "But if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." It is then the spirit of God in us which is born of God, and in which we are manifested as the children of God, who is the Father of our spirits; even as the fathers which we have had of our flesh, who have corrected us, and to whom we have given reverence, are the fathers of our fleshly nature. – Heb. xii. 9. Our flesh is not born of the spirit of God, or it would not still require to be changed at the resurrection from a natural to a spiritual body, from a corruptible to an incorruptible, from a mortal to an immortal state; for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Neither is the spirit in us whereby we are sealed unto the resurrection of life and immortality born of the flesh. These two natures, though found in all the saints while here on earth, are not only distinct, but they are antagonistic, and so greatly in conflict that the one is at war with the other, and so much so that the christian, who possesses both, cannot do the things that he would. Every christian, while in the flesh, feels most sensibly and painfully the malignant enmity of the flesh in its violent lusting against the spirit, often bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members. Nominal professors and graceless hypocrites may feel no such warfare; they may imagine that the elements of their fleshly nature are so changed and reformed as to need no watching or self-denial. They tell us that the faculties of their nature are so changed, that the same elements of their flesh which once loved sin now love holiness, and in them the love of sin is dead. There is nothing now in them that is not made spiritual by the new birth; and

we doubt not that some of the dear children of God, whose daily experience disproves the theory, have inconsiderately drank in the theory, and given countenance to the baseless infatuation. The desires for holiness and love to God, which are felt by every heaven-born subject of grace, are not improved faculties of our old, carnal nature, but they are the direct and legitimate fruits of the spirit which is given to us in the new birth; while all the fleshly propensities of our old, earthly nature, though held in restraint, are still lurking in our flesh, and requiring to be vigilantly watched, denied, crucified and resisted, lest they should bring us into captivity to the law of sin which still remains in our members.

"'Tis thus with Israel now on earth,
Few are their days of real mirth;
Their inbred lusts their souls annoy,
Disturb their peace and damp their joy.

"Though free from sin by Jesus' blood,
They feel their fetters and their load;
In chains of guilt compell'd to groan,
Oft seeking rest, but finding none.

"A daily cross, a stubborn will,
A heart replete with every ill,
Affections prone from God to go,
Are bounds that only Israel know."

Let all who are of the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and in the spirit only, who rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, examine carefully their own experience before they scoff at the doctrine of a warfare between the old man in them, which is after the flesh, and the new man in them, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

In conclusion, we have given as our understanding of the testimony of the scriptures our belief that as children of the flesh, all mankind are alike the children of the earthly Adam, and that the relationship implied by the terms, children of God, or children of Satan, is in reference to the spirit that dwells in them, by which our standing and characters are developed and demonstrated. “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning;” and whosoever is born of God doth not, cannot sin, because he is born of God. “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.” – 1 John iii. 8-10

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 22
November 15, 1880

FREE AGENCY.

MR. SANDS, of the *Religious Herald,* of Richmond, Va., has served up to his readers part of a sermon said to have been delivered in South Carolina by Wlm. B. Johnson, D. D.,in which the doctor professes to have proved *clearly* that man is a free agent, and at the same time that God is a sovereign! The logic by which the doctor has attempted to prove both sides of this palpable paradox is this:

"In considering them separately, each may approve itself to every mind; but in attempting to reconcile them, serious difficulties may a rise. From our inability to reconcile these two points, we may be tempted to reject the one at the expense of the other, or to reject both."

Thus, although the learned doctor virtually admits that the two points are antipodes with each other, yet he contends that they must be received and believed by those free agents who cannot reconcile them, and the way to do this thing is to believe them one at a time, as it is beyond our capacity to believe both at the same time.

The mode of proving that man is a free agent, is as queer as that of disposing of the glaring inconsistency of his theory:

"Not free, what proof could they have given sincere,
Of true allegiance, constant faith and love,
Where only what they needs must do appeared,
Not what they would; what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason, (reason also is choice,)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me."

Ergo, the doctor draws the conclusion that this world must be peopled ‘with free agents, or with absolute slaves; bound fast in the chain of fate, of absolute incompetency to deliver himself from its iron mandate. What a fine thing it is to be a doctor! Truly these things are hidden from babes and sucklings, and revealed to doctors!

Hereafter we will attempt to prove that such a thing as a free agent cannot possibly exist in heaven, earth or hell. Angels, men or devils, to be free, could not be accountable to God, nor to any other power, for their conduct; and if free, they are not amenable. *Agent,* when the term is applied to any created being or thing, signifies an actor for or in reference to another; he cannot be free, and at the same time an agent.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
Jan. 1, 1844.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 2
Pages: 381-382

FRUITFUL OLD AGE

How solemn is the period of old age! When the body is feeble, and bends toward the grave; and the mind, if clear, is filled with the retrospect of time and the prospect of eternity. When the hoary hairs, the wrinkled skin, the dim eye, the dull ear, the silvery voice, the trembling hand, the tottering step, betoken nature's decay and the final passing away from this world, the putting off of this tabernacle, and the entrance into the spiritual and eternal state. How repulsive is old age to the worldly mind! How many strive to keep the bloom of youth or the vigor of manhood! How many would fain deceive others, how many would fain deceive themselves, respecting the advances of age! How perfectly unprofitable do the years of decrepitude seem to the carnal eye! How peculiarly precious, therefore, are those promises and effects of the gospel, which make the old age to the eye of faith perhaps the most happy and fruitful period of life.

The psalmist describing the righteous, who are planted in the house of the Lord, comparing them to the palm-tree and the cedar of Lebanon, says, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing." There is a beauty in the old age of the Christian. "His leaf shall not wither." The frosts and storms and droughts of a lifetime have not checked his growth. He is, like the cedar and the palm, ever green. Where on earth is a lovelier sight, to the eye that can discern true spiritual beauty, than an aged saint, ready to fall into the grave, but leaning upon the Lord; the outward man perishing, but the inward man firm and strong; the darkness of night gathering, but only setting forth the radiance of his holiness. The bloom of eternal youth is seen beneath the snowy locks of age. How delightfully is the eye relieved to see scattered amongst the naked, moaning trees of yonder mountain the stately pines and cedars, even in midwinter,

dressed in the verdure of spring. Yet "not Lebanon with all its trees," yields so beautiful and sublime a sight as the hoary head, which is found in the way of righteousness.

But there is more beauty and sublimity here. "They shall still bring forth fruit." The believer, under the infirmities of age especially, if his life has been of active Christian labor, is no doubt often tempted to think that his work is done; that he can be of no more use to the world, and may as well be removed. But this is not the prompting of true religion. The true servant of God is not only willing to "wait all the days of his appointed time, till his change come," but feels that God is lengthening out his feeble life for a purpose. It is not hard for such an one to see what that purpose may be. On the other hand, some on whom the burden of years is heavy, are troubled because they cannot do more in the active service of God. While they feel that God is prolonging their life that they may still bear fruit, they feel as if they were bearing no fruit. They should reflect that they may serve God and benefit others by suffering as well as by acting.

Patience is perhaps the brightest of the Christian graces, because it shines amidst darkness. Let not the aged soldier of the cross think that he can do nothing for his Master, so long as he can suffer for him. Suffering is, with the true Christian, doing. The Christian spirit of submission is not far from that of active obedience. It is an element of that spirit of heavenly strength, by which the believer overcomes all evil, controls it all, and makes it serve his own religious improvement. It turns the sword into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning hook; the instruments of destruction into implements of divine husbandry for his good. Whence does this spirit of submission come? Not form the natural heart, as the cold resignation of the Stoic, to his fate, but from Christ. It is the Spirit of Christ, working in the believer, to will and to do.

In Christ it is said, "Not my will, but thine be done." It makes the Christian say the same. In Christ it said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down, and I have power to take it again." In Paul it said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." In every believer it ought to say the same. "I take this burden upon myself. Neither God, nor man, nor Satan, forces it upon me against my will. I know, that I, like the Captain of my salvation, am to be made perfect through suffering. I willingly, gladly suffer, as of my own accord. I lay down my life, that I may take it again. I live by Christ living in me; and I know that in him I have power to lay down my life, and have power to take it again." This is the real character of the Christian spirit of submission. With it, suffering and acting are one. How it changes the character of all affliction! How it lightens the burden, cheers the gloom, strengthens the weakness, and fills with activity the otherwise unprofitable hours of old age!

Thus the aged disciple brings forth fruit, if in no other way, still by his example of patient waiting in Christian hope; by showing to those who would say, Where now is your God? that the Lord does not cast off his people in the time of old age; that religion outlives the decay of nature, and cheers the saint to the end with a hope which no delay of the promise can impair.

Middletown, N.Y.,
Dec. 1, 1855
Elder Gilbert Beebe

FRUITS OF THE REVIVAL.

The religious excitement which has engrossed the public mind to an unusual degree for the past few months, is called a ***Revival***, and we have no objection to its being so designated, if it be clearly distinguished from those seasons of refreshing which the Lord is pleased to send from time to time, from his presence, to revive his saints; causing the north wind to awake, and the south wind to blow upon his garden, or church, that the spices may flow out. To reanimate, or produce activity in anything, may be called a revival, and so the term is applied to commerce, science, agriculture, &c., and may be as properly applied to the revival of the corruptions of anti-Christ, as to the refreshing seasons which come to the Zion of God when his presence is sensibly felt and enjoyed by the saints. Paul speaks of the revival of sin, and gives solemn warnings to the saints of these latter days, of perilous times for the saints, when the revivals of the powers of darkness prevail. In the present *revival*, (for so we will call it,) there is no new life or new principle developed. Some new resolutions to give some new direction to the fleshy powers and energies before in possession are apparent. Among the great multitude recently *revived*, which are counted by thousands, we have not yet heard of a single instance of any being brought to the knowledge of the truth, or to a knowledge of the true God, much less to a love of truth, and reverence for what God has spoken. So far as our personal knowledge of the *revived* extends, they have simply been converted from the state of Gallio, who cared for none of these things, to that of bitter opposers of the gospel of Christ, the sovereignty of God, and of all who contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. This may truly be a revival, but it is nothing new; the world, the flesh and

the devil were always opposed to the cause and people of the living God.

The Redeemer, when with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, admonished them to beware of false prophets, and the apostle John says that many of them had at that day gone out into the world. The Redeemer also intimates that they wear the guise of sheep, or of christians, but they are none the less savage and destructive when they, by deception, gain the confidence of the flock of the Good Shepherd. The simple rule laid down, Matthew vii. 16-20, is applicable in all cases, and throughout all time, for the detection of wolves when they come in sheep's clothing: "Ye shall know them by their fruits." It is not said, Ye shall know them by their dress, by their professions, or by their respectable standing in the world, but simply by their fruits. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." In attending to this admonition of our Lord, three points require special attention.

First. What are we to understand by *good* and *evil* fruits?
Second. The total inability of false prophets to produce good fruits.
Third. That the children of God shall, no others can, detect false prophets by this rule.

Good fruits in a gospel sense, are fruits of that spirit which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The fruits of that spirit are love, joy, peace, gentleness, faith, &c. On the other hand, the fruits, or works of the flesh, are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like. The true prophet of the Lord cannot bring forth these, nor can the

false prophets bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, and produce fruits unto holiness, the end of which is everlasting life. But, "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and all the fruit he can bear is the fruit of the flesh. The good fruits of the good tree are produced as a consequence, and are an evidence that the tree has first been made good, by vital and conjugal union with Christ, as the apostle instructs us, Romans vii. 4, 5: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are also become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death." Hence we learn the impossibility of carnal men who are in the flesh, and serving religiously only in the *oldness of the letter*; bringing forth any other fruit than that which is unto death. And as all men are by nature in the flesh, and strangers to that Spirit of which Christ said, "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." - John xiv. 17, they are without ability to bring forth fruit unto God. Lastly we designed to notice the qualification of those who are exclusively truly born of God, (and not of the will or works of man, or of the flesh,) and who are led by that Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, to detect false prophets, by their fruit. Unto them it is given to know the things of the Spirit, the mysteries of Christ's kingdom, but unto them which are without it is not given. To all those who only possess the wisdom of this world, all these things of the Spirit are in parables. The apostle John says concerning these false prophets, "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." - 1 John iv. 5, 6.

The prophet Habakkuk, in his prayer expresses the desire of all who know the Lord: "O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." But the revival of God's work is infinitely beyond the control, management or comprehension of men.

The popular revival, which is now in its full blast in many places, is only, as far as we can perceive, a revival of the works of men. Hence the clerical engineering of its whole machinery. We use but their own language, which they publish to the world, when we say, They can get these revivals up and maintain them by their own agency, and when they contend that the number of the saved and of those who finally perish, depends upon the efforts and contributions of men. But when God quickens the dead, that birth which is by his power, is as far removed from the power, influence and agency of men, as is the blowing of the wind: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou [Nicodemus] hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." - John iii. 8. But such is very far from being the case in the revivals which are gotten up by men. This wind bloweth as they direct, and they know whence it cometh, for they can sow to the wind, and reap the whirlwind.

Middletown, N.Y.,
June 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

FRUITS OF THE REVIVAL.

The religious excitement which has engrossed the public mind to an unusual degree for the past few months, is called a ***Revival***, and we have no objection to its being so designated, if it be clearly distinguished from those seasons of refreshing which the Lord is pleased to send from time to time, from his presence, to revive his saints; causing the north wind to awake, and the south wind to blow upon his garden, or church, that the spices may flow out. To reanimate, or produce activity in anything, may be called a revival, and so the term is applied to commerce, science, agriculture, &c., and may be as properly applied to the revival of the corruptions of anti-Christ, as to the refreshing seasons which come to the Zion of God when his presence is sensibly felt and enjoyed by the saints. Paul speaks of the revival of sin, and gives solemn warnings to the saints of these latter days, of perilous times for the saints, when the revivals of the powers of darkness prevail. In the present *revival*, (for so we will call it,) there is no new life or new principle developed. Some new resolutions to give some new direction to the fleshy powers and energies before in possession are apparent. Among the great multitude recently *revived*, which are counted by thousands, we have not yet heard of a single instance of any being brought to the knowledge of the truth, or to a knowledge of the true God, much less to a love of truth, and reverence for what God has spoken. So far as our personal knowledge of the *revived* extends, they have simply been converted from the state of Gallio, who cared for none of these things, to that of bitter opposers of the gospel of Christ, the sovereignty of God, and of all who contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. This may truly be a revival, but it is nothing new; the world, the flesh and

the devil were always opposed to the cause and people of the living God.

The Redeemer, when with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, admonished them to beware of false prophets, and the apostle John says that many of them had at that day gone out into the world. The Redeemer also intimates that they wear the guise of sheep, or of christians, but they are none the less savage and destructive when they, by deception, gain the confidence of the flock of the Good Shepherd. The simple rule laid down, Matthew vii. 16-20, is applicable in all cases, and throughout all time, for the detection of wolves when they come in sheep's clothing: "Ye shall know them by their fruits." It is not said, Ye shall know them by their dress, by their professions, or by their respectable standing in the world, but simply by their fruits. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." In attending to this admonition of our Lord, three points require special attention.

First. What are we to understand by *good* and *evil* fruits?
Second. The total inability of false prophets to produce good fruits.
Third. That the children of God shall, no others can, detect false prophets by this rule.

Good fruits in a gospel sense, are fruits of that spirit which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. The fruits of that spirit are love, joy, peace, gentleness, faith, &c. On the other hand, the fruits, or works of the flesh, are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings and such like. The true prophet of the Lord cannot bring forth these, nor can the

false prophets bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God, and produce fruits unto holiness, the end of which is everlasting life. But, "If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and all the fruit he can bear is the fruit of the flesh. The good fruits of the good tree are produced as a consequence, and are an evidence that the tree has first been made good, by vital and conjugal union with Christ, as the apostle instructs us, Romans vii. 4, 5: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are also become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members, to bring forth fruit unto death." Hence we learn the impossibility of carnal men who are in the flesh, and serving religiously only in the *oldness of the letter*; bringing forth any other fruit than that which is unto death. And as all men are by nature in the flesh, and strangers to that Spirit of which Christ said, "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." - John xiv. 17, they are without ability to bring forth fruit unto God. Lastly we designed to notice the qualification of those who are exclusively truly born of God, (and not of the will or works of man, or of the flesh,) and who are led by that Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, to detect false prophets, by their fruit. Unto them it is given to know the things of the Spirit, the mysteries of Christ's kingdom, but unto them which are without it is not given. To all those who only possess the wisdom of this world, all these things of the Spirit are in parables. The apostle John says concerning these false prophets, "They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." - 1 John iv. 5, 6.

The prophet Habakkuk, in his prayer expresses the desire of all who know the Lord: "O Lord revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." But the revival of God's work is infinitely beyond the control, management or comprehension of men.

The popular revival, which is now in its full blast in many places, is only, as far as we can perceive, a revival of the works of men. Hence the clerical engineering of its whole machinery. We use but their own language, which they publish to the world, when we say, They can get these revivals up and maintain them by their own agency, and when they contend that the number of the saved and of those who finally perish, depends upon the efforts and contributions of men. But when God quickens the dead, that birth which is by his power, is as far removed from the power, influence and agency of men, as is the blowing of the wind: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou [Nicodemus] hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, or whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." - John iii. 8. But such is very far from being the case in the revivals which are gotten up by men. This wind bloweth as they direct, and they know whence it cometh, for they can sow to the wind, and reap the whirlwind.

Middletown, N.Y.,
June 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

GALATIANS 3:8

Dear Brother Beebe: We read, Gal. iii. 8, "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." My mind is perplexed on the above passage, particularly on the words, *And the Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen, &c.* I have always taken the Scriptures to be the inspired writings of the Old and New Testaments. Daniel says in chapter x. 21, "I will show thee, that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth," and Christ told the Jews to search the Scriptures, for in them they thought they had eternal life, and that they testified of him. Again, "This day is the Scripture fulfilled," &c. And again, the Scripture cannot be broken. Christ died according to the Scriptures, and rose again according to the Scriptures. I could mention various other passages, where the term Scriptures is used in reference to the inspired writings, but in the passage first named, I cannot see that it refers to the Old or New Testament. You see howl am difficulted? believing the Old and New Testament to be the Scriptures, how could they foresee? or does it refer to the inspired men who wrote the Scriptures, or to the I AM, who created all things; for it is God alone who knows, governs and foresees all things, and manages all things after the counsel of his own will. He declares the end from the beginning, and known unto God are all his work from the foundation of the world. Then is it him that foresaw that he would justify the heathen through faith?

When you receive this, in all probability the old year will be numbered with the things that are past, and a new year will be calling upon us to adore him who has spared us to see it. Let me, as one of your patrons, greet you: Well done, thou

good and faithful servant of the Most High God, and as you advance in age, may you grow in grace, and by faith lay hold of this promise, and enjoy its consolation. “Even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.” - Isa. xlvi. 4. And may the God of all grace, long preserve you as a watchman to root out and pull down and destroy, and to throw down error and heresy, by whatever name it may be called, and may you build up and strengthen God’s little ones in the faith of his elect.

Yours to serve,
JOEL T. HALBERT.
Columbus, Miss., Dec. 26, 1859.

Reply: We understand the apostle to refer to the inspiration by which the Scriptures were written. The literal meaning of the word *Scripture,* signifies anything that is written, but the term applies in a Bible sense to the written testimony of God which is recorded in the Old and New Testament; the records, which by way of distinction from profane records, are called the Holy Scriptures, and we are told by Paul, 2 Tim. iii. 17, that they are all given by inspiration of God; and that they are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to every good work. As the Holy Scriptures are to perform all these offices; reproving, correcting, instructing, &c., they must reflect the perfections of their divine Author to some extent, at least. Not the mere ink and paper, but the inspired testimony of God. Hence the Scriptures are spoken of as speaking, as testifying, and as seeing, &c. These books are of themselves only of earthly composition, paper and ink, totally inanimate, and having no power to see, hear, or speak, yet the testimony which they have recorded in them, is the inspired wisdom of God himself, and as the inspiration of God they

see all things past, present and to come. How could they testify of things of which they had no perception? Indeed, the peculiar excellency of the Bible is that it does foresee, and foreseing, it foretells what God has in store for them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose. So far as the mere book is concerned, the terms are used figuratively, but in its application to the inspired testimony of God, it is not figurative nor allegorical. As the inspiration of God, the Scriptures foresee, foreknow and foretell; they declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are yet to be accomplished, saying, God's counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. If in this sense the Scriptures did not foresee, they could be to us but a record of the past, and unable to instruct the man of God in righteousness, or to point us to that heavenly abode in glory, which is yet to be enjoyed by the saints, when time shall be no more. Thus the Scriptures foresaw that God would justify the heathen through faith, that is, the inspiration, or testimony of the Scriptures anticipated, predicted and declared beforehand that in Abraham all nations should be blessed, that distant ages, and remote tribes of the earth were by the unchanging decree of God, interested in the blessings of Abraham. The inspired Scriptures are a perfect transcript of the mind, will, purpose and decrees of God, who spake to the fathers by the prophets, and subsequently to us, by his Son. But their being written or spoken did not give them pre-science. What are to us now literally the Scriptures, were the testimony and truth of God before they were written, and they foresaw, not only in Abraham's days, but from everlasting, what blessings our covenant God in Christ had treasured up for us poor Gentiles. Hence the Scriptures *were given.* By whom? By inspiration of God. Where were they before they were given? They were securely hidden in the cabinet of the gracious giver; and could foresee as well before they were given, as afterwards.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 296 - 298

GALATIANS III. 16.

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ."

How many churches there were in Galatia, we are not informed, nor is it necessary for us to know, whether many or few, they were all addressed by the faithful and divinely inspired apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ. The peculiar circumstances which called for the admonitions, reproofs and corrections in righteousness, with which this epistle abounds, are disclosed by the apostle, who used great plainness of speech in this his labor of love. Paul marveled to find these Galatians, before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth crucified, so soon moved from him who had called them into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel; which is not another; but there were some who troubled them, and who would pervert the gospel of Christ. These troublers of the churches were detected by the holy apostle of our Lord, and their base designs to pervert the gospel of our blessed Redeemer, are discovered and exposed, and the record of the same placed as a beacon upon the hill of Zion, for an everlasting warning to the saints of God, in all succeeding ages of their militant state, to beware of those workmongrel legalists, who, under pretense of setting up a higher standard of morality and religion, than that which was taught by Christ and his apostles, insinuate themselves into the confidence of the saints, until they find opportunity to beguile unstable souls. It is probable that in every age of the gospel church, from Pentecost to the present day, some portions of the church have been infested with the same description of troublers, under a variety of names, forms and pretenses, but whose grand design has been to so pervert the gospel of Christ as to represent it unsafe to trust alone for justification

before God in the blood and righteousness of the Son of God, without some work of the creature to give efficiency to the Savior's blood, and to entitle us to the saving benefits of his righteousness: "Except ye be circumcised and keep the law of Moses," say they, "ye cannot be saved." This was the language of Judaizing teachers at Antioch, at Galatia, and such, in substance, is the doctrine of all will-worshipers, and gospel perverters, down to the present hour. The same arguments used by the inspired Paul, in this epistle, for the refutation of the doctrines of those who troubled the Galatian saints, are equally in point at this day, in resisting the strong current of arminianism which has only waxed more strong, artful and sly, as it has progressed in years.

Having himself been brought up a pharisee, in the Jews' religion, this apostle to the Gentiles was eminently qualified to treat upon the subject of the old covenant, and the whole Jewish economy; but by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, his arguments, deductions and conclusions, are free from all the imperfections of human judgment, infallible, beyond all contradiction. These simple-hearted Gentile converts, who knew that circumcision was enjoined upon the carnal seed of Abraham, by the old covenant, and that the sons of Jacob were required by the Sinai covenant to keep the law of Moses, were easily ensnared by designing and artful Judaizers, to drink in the plausible but intoxicating and bewitching doctrines which they taught, and probably thought that even if the gospel was alone sufficient to save them, as a prudential measure, they would be still more safe, if in addition to justification by Christ, they could avail themselves of a law-righteousness to fall back upon in case of necessity, and it could do them no harm. If such were their thoughts, how surprised and mortified must they have been to hear the apostle affirm that this notion was a complete perversion of the gospel of Christ; that if they were circumcised they became debtors to do the whole law, and if

they performed all the law, and were justified by the law, they were then fallen from grace, and Christ should profit them nothing; that if salvation be of grace, it is no more of works, &c.

By way of correcting the wrong impressions which had been made on the minds of the saints, by false teachers, in regard to the spirit and design of the law, to show them what that law could, and what it could not do, the apostle labored to show them, that while the letter of the law with its almost interminable ceremonies, temporal blessings for obedience to its precepts, and temporal curses for disobedience, was given to the carnal, or fleshly tribes of Israel, and adapted to their carnal state and condition, that every precept, every rite, ordinance and ceremony, that it contained, was typical of good things to come; of things of a spiritual nature. Even Abraham, and all the patriarchs, in their persons, in their progeny, and in all their history, including all that is written of them in the Scriptures, were figures of things which should be brought to light under the gospel dispensation. Conspicuous among these types, the apostle recognized the covenant which God made with Abraham, in which Abraham, as a unit, and Abraham, as multiplied beyond the number of the starry hosts, was included, and to this covenant, and its provisions, the apostle alludes in the text proposed for consideration.

Now to Abraham and to his seed were the promises made. For an account of the covenant and promises, read Gen. xii. 1-3. “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” Also, Gen, xvii. 3-7. “And Abram fell on his face:

and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and thy seed after thee." And for the confirmation of this covenant, read Gen. xxii. 15-18. "And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord; for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."

From these Scriptures we perceive the truth of the apostle's declaration, that unto Abraham and his seed were the promises made. All the seed of Abraham being in the loins of Abraham at the time the promises were first made, and only Isaac his son, his "only son," made manifest by generation, when the promises were confirmed by the oath of God, to Abraham and to his seed.

"He saith not, And to seeds as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed which is Christ." How strikingly sublime and glorious the figure before us! Abraham the chosen, called and consecrated friend and servant of the eternal God, separated from his father's house, from all his kindred, and from all the inhabitants of the world; called out alone. In him embodied, and by him represented the whole election of God. All their life and being was in him, when the covenant and promises

were made. The covenant and promises, providing for, and securing their subsequent manifestation, by generation after the flesh, and all their covenant blessings given and secured to them in him. They were so completely identified with Abraham, that the patriarch could not be known in the covenant or promises without them. “Blessing I will bless thee, multiplying, I will multiply thee.” The personal pronoun “thee” as fully identified the seed, as the progenitor. Thee, when viewed as a unit, and equally so, when multiplied. Thee, when called from his father’s house and kindred, and thee, when multiplied into many nations. The singular number must not be lost sight of in this astonishing figure, for, “He saith not, unto seeds, as of many, but as of one.” One before the birth of any of his posterity, and but one in the development of all his seed. Here then we have the patterns of the things in heaven; though this is but a man’s covenant, or a covenant made with Abraham, as a man, and embracing his natural posterity after the flesh; yet inasmuch as it was confirmed by the oath of him who could swear by no greater, and who swore by himself, none could annul or add to it. All the provisions of the covenant, and all the blessings promised, were made certain and secure to Abraham and his seed. According to the covenant and promises, the process of multiplying began with the birth of Isaac, and continued until Abraham outnumbered the sands of the sea shore, and had branched out into a multitude of nations. This multiplication which began with Isaac, terminated, or was completed, by the birth of the Messiah, for confirmation of which, read Matthew i. 1-16. Now to Abraham, in his seed, was the land wherein Abraham sojourned being a stranger, eventually given; according to the covenant and promises, after that seed had sojourned in Egyptian captivity four hundred years, and all the other stipulations of the covenant were fulfilled to Abraham, in his seed, according to his flesh, no man disannulling nor adding thereto. “So [says Paul] after he [Abraham] had patiently

endured, he obtained the promise." - Heb. vi. 15. What promise? The promise made in this covenant, "Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying, I will multiply thee." - See verse 14, same chapter. Though Abraham, in his individual person, had been dead for centuries, yet Abraham multiplied, in his seed, received the promises. Now for the application of the figure. "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as one, and to thy seed which is Christ." It is Christ, set forth, the same as the rock in Horeb, which supplied the streams of life and salvation to Israel in the wilderness, was Christ. According to the flesh, Christ was of the seed of Abraham. - See Matthew i. 1. But we understand the expression in a higher, and more important sense, Christ as the grand antitype of all types, and the substance of all the shadows going before. Christ in coming in the flesh, "took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." - Heb. ii. 16. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." - Gal. Iii. 29.

Abraham as the head of life to, and personal embodiment of all the fleshly seed, very fitly represented in figure, what the gospel has now disclosed of the church of the living God created, chosen, blessed with all spiritual blessings, preserved, saved and called, in Christ Jesus before the world began. As Abraham was the head of life, and old covenant blessings to his posterity, so Christ is, and was, the Head of spiritual life, and of all new covenant blessings to his spiritual posterity; to that seed that should serve him, and that should be counted to the Lord for a generation. As all the fleshly seed of Abraham, including Levi, and all the levitical priesthood, was in the loins of Abraham, when the covenant and promises were made, and as God made that covenant, and those promises with, and to them, when, and as they then existed, only in him, so the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath blessed us, (all the saints and faithful in

Christ Jesus, Eph. i. 1,) with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world. - Eph. i. 3, 4. And as the covenant and promises made to Abraham, as fully and as infallibly embraced his posterity as his person, so the covenant of life and peace, which the eternal God has made with his chosen, as fully and infallibly embraced the whole election of grace, as it did the chosen and anointed Head over all things to his church. No old covenant blessings were ever added to the fleshly seed of Abraham, which were not provided for in the original covenant, neither is there any new covenant blessing ever to be given to the church of God, which was not embraced in covenant provision made and secured in Christ, for his people, before the world began; nor can any that were made ever fail to be accomplished. Hence our hope of eternal life is based on what God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

From what we have written, it will be perceived that we understand that the whole spiritual import of the covenant and promises made to Abraham, had reference to Christ. While the seed of Abraham embraced a numerous posterity after the flesh, which are not the children of God, a multitude of nations, &c., the antitypical, or spiritual application had Christ, and in him his church, alone in view. In this sense, Christ as a unit, is recognized as the seed of Abraham, but as all the election of grace are members of Christ, his body, his flesh and his bones, so, If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. - Gal. iii. 29.

We might greatly extend our remarks on this interesting subject, but we must forbear for the present.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 186 - 192

GALATIANS 4:4,5

Brother Beebe: I have never troubled you for your views on any passage of scripture; but I will now ask your views on Galatians 4:4,5. There we read that Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Now I wish to know if the church of God with all the posterity of Adam fell under the law in the same sense spoken of in the text; or whether the apostle is here only speaking of the church of God? May the Lord spare you long to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and may you never shun to declare all the counsel of God is my prayer.

Jacob Richards, Sr.
Grant County, Ia.
September 23, 1866.

Reply: The words proposed for consideration are, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

We understand the apostle to be addressing the church of God exclusively. All the epistles are addressed to the people of God, or churches of Christ, and none to the world. As the law and prophets were all given to the people of Israel under the old dispensation, so the ministry of the gospel is exclusively addressed to the spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation.

Neither the church nor the posterity of Adam came under the law by the fall; but all came under its penalty by disobedience of the law under which they were created. If man had not been under the law of God he could not have fallen at all; for sin is the transgression of the law. If Adam

and his posterity had been created (as some contend)free *agents* to act out unrestrained the freedom of their own will, they could not be condemned for so acting. But the very fact of their falling from a state of innocence into sin and under condemnation and wrath proves that they were not free agents, but were held amenable to the law of God under which they existed before their fall. Neither did Christ come under the law by a fall, but was made under the law by being made flesh, or by his incarnation by which he was legally identified with his members whom he came to redeem. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” In doing this he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

It is true that all the human family sinned in Adam, and fell under the condemnation of the law of God, but it is not true that Christ identified himself with all mankind in his assumption of flesh; but we are told that he took on him the seed of *Abraham,* not *Adam.* Abraham was called out from his kindred, and from all the families of the earth, made the father of the faithful; and his seed, the faithful, were not reckoned in the fleshly descendants of Abraham for the children of the flesh, even of Abraham, “That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:8).” “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29).” In the passage before referred to in Hebrews 2:14, we learn that the flesh which Christ took on him was the same that his children are partakers of. And of these children he said in verse 13 of the same chapter, “And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Hebrews 2:13).” These children, which were the special gift of God to Christ, are partakers of flesh and blood,

and he, in being made flesh, took part of the same. And this assumption of their flesh was for the suffering of death, and to bring many sons unto glory.

Let us examine our text: “But when the fullness of time was come.” The fullness of what time? In the context we are told that in this subject the children which God had given to Christ are Abraham’s seed, in the true meaning of the type, and that these children, until an appointed time, differed nothing from servants, though joint heirs with Christ himself; but were under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. At that appointed time they should attain their majority, or become of age. At that time (the fullness of the time appointed of the Father), “God sent forth his Son.” In whom was secured their life, their sonship, their relation to God as children, in whom they were chosen, sanctified, or set apart, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:3-4).” That his advent was delayed until the fullness of the time was come shows that there was a purpose of God going before; that he came as it was written (or decreed) of him in the volume of the book. It was not a mere adventure, experiment, or uncertain enterprise, but it was the fulfillment of a promise which God, that cannot lie, had promised before the world began. It could not be hurried on prematurely; the time must be fulfilled, and not a moment lost or wasted. God sent him forth; “Made of a woman.” Not only in that by a miraculous conception he was born of a virgin; but in full harmony with the declaration of God, as the seed of a woman, that should bruise the serpent’s head. The church of God is called a woman, and of her it is said, “For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of

Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." The name, or title, *woman,* was given to Eve because of its signification. "She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of the man." As Adam is the figure of him that was to come, so Eve was a figure of the church. As such, Christ has recognized her as the bone of his bones, and as the flesh of his flesh; and as having her origin, her creation and spiritual existence in him before she was ever seen coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband; and she is called woman to signify that her life and immortality are hidden with Christ in God. To the church the promise was made that "a woman shall compass a man." "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11:26)." "And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren (Matthew 12:49)!" "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." From these, with many other scriptures, we learn that while in Christ all his members are made partakers of the divine nature (see II Peter 1:4). So Christ, in being made of a woman, has taken part of the flesh of which his children are partakers; and in our flesh he has taken on him our infirmities; and has so identified himself with his children in their flesh; as to be legally held responsible for their offenses; and made to bear our griefs, carry our sorrows, be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and have the chastisement of our peace laid upon him, so that with his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:4,5). But to pass:

In being made of a woman, he was necessarily made under the law that the woman was under. Had he taken on him the

nature of angels, that nature would not have brought him under any other than the law which holds dominion over angels; but in becoming the seed of the woman, the church, he becomes a subject of the law which she was under in the flesh of which she was a partaker; for "he likewise himself also took part of the same." In doing this, he took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience, and became obedient unto death.

All this was, as our text assures us, "to redeem them that were under the law, that we (the children) might receive the adoption of sons." *We,* though sons of God, as created and existing in Christ, sons in his sonship, being secured in him as his seed; that should serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30), yet being partakers of flesh and blood, in our relation to the earthly Adam, differed nothing in our fleshly relation from servants, were by nature children of wrath even as others. His advent was to save his people from their sins; and he took part of our flesh, for the suffering of death, that he might bear our sins in his own body on the tree, and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, being put to death in that flesh, and quickened by the spirit of immortality in which he embodied and represented us in his Sonship, before the mountains were brought forth or ever the earth was. In this mediatorial work he has been perfectly successful. By one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart; and we are freely justified, through the redemption that is in him. Now the impediment is removed; the fullness of the time of our minority has elapsed; and the Spirit of adoption is given, and the redeemed are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. No more servants under the law, but as sons in union with the risen Jesus, are we admitted into the family of God, and under law to Christ; whom God hath raised from the dead, and exalted far above all principalities and powers, and given

him to be the head over all things to the church which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 1, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 405 - 408

GALATIANS 4:4,5

Brother Beebe: I have never troubled you for your views on any passage of scripture; but I will now ask your views on Galatians 4:4,5. There we read that Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Now I wish to know if the church of God with all the posterity of Adam fell under the law in the same sense spoken of in the text; or whether the apostle is here only speaking of the church of God? May the Lord spare you long to wield the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and may you never shun to declare all the counsel of God is my prayer.

Jacob Richards, Sr.
Grant County, Ia.
September 23, 1866.

Reply: The words proposed for consideration are, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

We understand the apostle to be addressing the church of God exclusively. All the epistles are addressed to the people of God, or churches of Christ, and none to the world. As the law and prophets were all given to the people of Israel under the old dispensation, so the ministry of the gospel is exclusively addressed to the spiritual Israel under the gospel dispensation.

Neither the church nor the posterity of Adam came under the law by the fall; but all came under its penalty by disobedience of the law under which they were created. If man had not been under the law of God he could not have fallen at all; for sin is the transgression of the law. If Adam

and his posterity had been created (as some contend)free *agents* to act out unrestrained the freedom of their own will, they could not be condemned for so acting. But the very fact of their falling from a state of innocence into sin and under condemnation and wrath proves that they were not free agents, but were held amenable to the law of God under which they existed before their fall. Neither did Christ come under the law by a fall, but was made under the law by being made flesh, or by his incarnation by which he was legally identified with his members whom he came to redeem. “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” In doing this he was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

It is true that all the human family sinned in Adam, and fell under the condemnation of the law of God, but it is not true that Christ identified himself with all mankind in his assumption of flesh; but we are told that he took on him the seed of *Abraham,* not *Adam.* Abraham was called out from his kindred, and from all the families of the earth, made the father of the faithful; and his seed, the faithful, were not reckoned in the fleshly descendants of Abraham for the children of the flesh, even of Abraham, “That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:8).” “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:29).” In the passage before referred to in Hebrews 2:14, we learn that the flesh which Christ took on him was the same that his children are partakers of. And of these children he said in verse 13 of the same chapter, “And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me (Hebrews 2:13).” These children, which were the special gift of God to Christ, are partakers of flesh and blood,

and he, in being made flesh, took part of the same. And this assumption of their flesh was for the suffering of death, and to bring many sons unto glory.

Let us examine our text: “But when the fullness of time was come.” The fullness of what time? In the context we are told that in this subject the children which God had given to Christ are Abraham’s seed, in the true meaning of the type, and that these children, until an appointed time, differed nothing from servants, though joint heirs with Christ himself; but were under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. At that appointed time they should attain their majority, or become of age. At that time (the fullness of the time appointed of the Father), “God sent forth his Son.” In whom was secured their life, their sonship, their relation to God as children, in whom they were chosen, sanctified, or set apart, and blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:3-4).” That his advent was delayed until the fullness of the time was come shows that there was a purpose of God going before; that he came as it was written (or decreed) of him in the volume of the book. It was not a mere adventure, experiment, or uncertain enterprise, but it was the fulfillment of a promise which God, that cannot lie, had promised before the world began. It could not be hurried on prematurely; the time must be fulfilled, and not a moment lost or wasted. God sent him forth; “Made of a woman.” Not only in that by a miraculous conception he was born of a virgin; but in full harmony with the declaration of God, as the seed of a woman, that should bruise the serpent’s head. The church of God is called a woman, and of her it is said, “For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of

Hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." The name, or title, *woman,* was given to Eve because of its signification. "She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of the man." As Adam is the figure of him that was to come, so Eve was a figure of the church. As such, Christ has recognized her as the bone of his bones, and as the flesh of his flesh; and as having her origin, her creation and spiritual existence in him before she was ever seen coming down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband; and she is called woman to signify that her life and immortality are hidden with Christ in God. To the church the promise was made that "a woman shall compass a man." "And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob (Romans 11:26)." "And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren (Matthew 12:49)!" "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." From these, with many other scriptures, we learn that while in Christ all his members are made partakers of the divine nature (see II Peter 1:4). So Christ, in being made of a woman, has taken part of the flesh of which his children are partakers; and in our flesh he has taken on him our infirmities; and has so identified himself with his children in their flesh; as to be legally held responsible for their offenses; and made to bear our griefs, carry our sorrows, be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and have the chastisement of our peace laid upon him, so that with his stripes we are healed (Isaiah 53:4,5). But to pass:

In being made of a woman, he was necessarily made under the law that the woman was under. Had he taken on him the

nature of angels, that nature would not have brought him under any other than the law which holds dominion over angels; but in becoming the seed of the woman, the church, he becomes a subject of the law which she was under in the flesh of which she was a partaker; for "he likewise himself also took part of the same." In doing this, he took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience, and became obedient unto death.

All this was, as our text assures us, "to redeem them that were under the law, that we (the children) might receive the adoption of sons." *We,* though sons of God, as created and existing in Christ, sons in his sonship, being secured in him as his seed; that should serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30), yet being partakers of flesh and blood, in our relation to the earthly Adam, differed nothing in our fleshly relation from servants, were by nature children of wrath even as others. His advent was to save his people from their sins; and he took part of our flesh, for the suffering of death, that he might bear our sins in his own body on the tree, and put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, being put to death in that flesh, and quickened by the spirit of immortality in which he embodied and represented us in his Sonship, before the mountains were brought forth or ever the earth was. In this mediatorial work he has been perfectly successful. By one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart; and we are freely justified, through the redemption that is in him. Now the impediment is removed; the fullness of the time of our minority has elapsed; and the Spirit of adoption is given, and the redeemed are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. No more servants under the law, but as sons in union with the risen Jesus, are we admitted into the family of God, and under law to Christ; whom God hath raised from the dead, and exalted far above all principalities and powers, and given

him to be the head over all things to the church which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 1, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 405 - 408

GALATIANS V.4.

"Christ is become of no effect to you, whosoever of you are *justified* by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

The churches of Galatia had been assailed by Judaizing teachers, preaching to them that they could not be saved unless they were circumcised and kept the law; and some of those converts who had began in the Spirit, were so far bewitched as to entertain the idea that they were to be made perfect by the works of the law, and thus they became involved and entangled with the yoke of bondage; a yoke which neither they nor the fathers, not even the patriarchs of Israel, were able to bear. The apostle proved very conclusively in this epistle, that no man could be justified in the sight of God, by the works of the law, and because they could not, therefore Christ had redeemed them from under the law, was delivered for their offenses, and raised from the dead for their justification, that he had set them free from the law, as a yoke of bondage, by himself becoming the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and hence they were saved by grace, and not by works of their own. Having fully, clearly and irrefutably, established his position of justification alone, and freely, or graciously, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, he admonishes them in the beginning of this chapter, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage, and in urging this admonition he testified that if they resorted to the law for life, that was a rejection of Christ. If they were circumcised, after the manner of Moses, they thereby pledged themselves to perform the whole law themselves, and thus leaving Christ entirely out of their justification, he shall profit them nothing. Of what avail that he died for them, if their justification was established on their own

works, and not in his redemption? Again, in the text under consideration, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost he testifies that whosoever of them were justified by the law, to them Christ had become of no effect they were not saved by grace, but by works, as he had elsewhere testified, that if it were by works, then it was no more of grace. Salvation could not possibly be jointly of grace and of works, for if it were of the one then it was not of the other. We, if saved at all, must be saved either wholly of grace, or wholly of our own works, and if it were of the latter, Christ was made of no effect, and they were fallen from grace. That is, as grace is infinitely higher than legal works, so salvation by grace transcends salvation by works. Not that Paul either allowed that any could in reality be justified by the works of the law, which he plainly declared was impossible, nor that those who were saved by grace, could ever possibly lose their interest in that grace, which is equally impossible, but on the supposition that any were saved and justified by the law, then they were not subjects of grace, nor were they interested in Christ. Descending from grace to the theory of legal works, is truly a fall, and the depth of the fall is as great as is the distance of grace above works. The great design of the inspired writer is to show that we cannot consistently hold that salvation is conditional, and by the works of the law, without rejecting Christ as the Savior, and grace as the principle on which that salvation is extended to any of the fallen sons of men.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 1, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 222 - 224

GALATIANS V. 15.

"If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" – Gal. v. 15.

THE time has been when we thought this admonition to the saints quite inappropriate, when we have supposed that christians had no teeth to devour their brethren with; or, in other words, that the love of God shed abroad in their hearts would always so control their carriage as to make them kindly affectionate one to another. Nor can we yet relinquish that opinion; but we have painfully learned that the children of God, when influenced and governed by the passions and corruptions of nature, evince very little if any of that love, either to God or their brethren, which ought to characterize them as the followers of him who is meek and lowly. The admonition at the head of this article was intended for application; inspired by the Holy Ghost, it cannot be inappropriate; it must be applicable to the children of God, under some circumstances.

We have been led to some reflections on this subject in reviewing our last number, which was principally got, up during our confinement by indisposition, in consequence of which we were unable to give our usual attention to the selection of matter. Of the comparative merits of the parties it is impossible that we can be a competent judge; nor have we any disposition to sit as umpire in local matters of difficulty among our distant brethren. But this we do know, when things which involve the ministerial, moral, or christian character of our brethren are told in Gath, and published in the streets of Askelon, the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, and the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. We would seriously appeal to our brethren and correspondents: is it in harmony with the rule of our faith and practice, and in

accordance with the spirit of our calling, to vent our feelings to the prejudice of each other, through the columns of a public journal? Will such a course result in the peace of Zion, or the declarative glory of God? Is it calculated to bring aggrieved parties nearer to each other, and so promote and facilitate an amicable adjustment of difficulties? So far from securing any such results, all must see that a course of crimination and recrimination, sent out thousands of miles from the scene of action, will provoke resentment, if not retaliation, separating the parties involved so widely as to almost forbid the hope of final settlement. But, besides the effect immediately produced, in the alienation of the parties, such a disposition to publish, and, perhaps, exaggerate each other's faults, almost invariably places both parties in a very unfavorable and suspicious attitude in the eyes of distant readers. They are regarded as quarrelsome, sensitive, and, sometimes, even malicious. Nor is this all. Others are, however reluctantly, dragged into them; the editors and publishers of papers become involved. If, on the one hand, they refuse to publish the complaints of those who feel themselves aggrieved, they give offence, and are charged with a want of sympathy with their suffering brethren; and if they give wings to these complaints, anti, thereby, aggravate the difficulties, wound the hearts of brethren in all distant regions, and place a weapon in the hands of our inveterate and common enemies, who are ever ready to make capital of all the faults of the Old School Baptists, there also they are victims to censure, and also to the bitter consciousness of having acted in opposition to the spirit of the gospel.

We sincerely hope that in the future our brethren and correspondents will do themselves and us the favor to consider this matter, and they will show by their long-suffering, gentleness, kindness, and disposition to forgive one another as Christ has forgiven them, more of the image

of the heavenly and less of the corruptions of the earthly Adam.

We wish not to be understood, however, that there can be no circumstances which will justify the saints in publishing their trials. The case, for instance, of brother _____ of Sing Sing, N. Y., as stated in his letter in this number, is one of the class which ought to be made known. He, for his faith in Jesus, and steadfastness in the gospel, is cast out from a church which once stood upon the ground of the gospel; but now being taken captive by the enemy and carried down to Babylon, hurls her anathemas at all who will not follow her pernicious way. A faithful history of the church in this nineteenth century, requires a record of the persecutions of the saints who continue in the apostles' doctrine, and of the corruptions of those who are turned away from the truth, and are turned unto fables. Such a history may serve as a warning to the people of God in all subsequent ages of the church. But, let not confusion and intestine war disturb the songs of Zion. Let the remnant whom God has saved from the general deluge of corruption, be employed in praising God and building up each other in their most holy faith.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
April 15, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 425 - 427

GALATIANS VI. 16.

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God."

Christians are not to be indolent or inactive. God has called them by his grace, quickened them by his Spirit, written his law in their hearts, and translated them from the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son; and all this is done for them, not only to secure their ultimate happiness in the world of glory to which they are destined, but also that they should shew forth the praises of him who has loved them and given himself for them. To this end God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. The apostolic benediction in our text is not pronounced on as many as stand still, but as many as walk according to a certain rule, to which we propose to call the attention of our readers presently.

The frequent admonitions addressed to the saints, in the New Testament, to be vigilant and active, plainly show that the saints of our God have a race set before them, which they are called upon to run, a warfare in which they are to fight, hardness which they are to endure as good soldiers, burdens to bear, and offices of love and kindness to perform in the house of God, all of which demand constant diligence and activity. It is certainly to be lamented that at this day many who seem to entertain a hope in Christ, who love God and who delight in the society of his people, relish the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, who mourn when Zion mourns, and rejoice in her prosperity, and yet seem to feel but little if any conviction of the importance of the Savior's command, to take up their cross and follow him. It is true they are ready,

in theory, to admit that it is both the duty and privilege of all heaven-born children, to walk in all the ordinances of the house of God, blamelessly, and to follow the footsteps of their Lord and Master in all his ordinances, but still indulge the idea that it is proper for them to remain inactive, because they feel impressed with a sense of their unworthiness, and because they are sometimes oppressed with gloomy doubts and dismal fears, in relation to their hope. Should all of the redeemed family of our God, who are subject to the like doubts and fears in relation to their personal interest in the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, take the same position, there would be very few, if any, left to walk according to the rule of our apostle. Those timid, tried, tempted children of God, who are thus excusing themselves from taking an active part with the saints, because of their sense of unworthiness, would not hesitate a moment to recognize all others who relate to them the same exercises, as the children of God. Indeed nothing short of these very exercises would be by them received in evidence. Should any, for instance, relate to them the very experience which they are so anxious to obtain for themselves, they could not fellowship it. Suppose one should come forward and say, "I have no doubts, no fears, I have no sense of unworthiness, I feel perfectly satisfied that I am worthy, and that all is right on my part"; the poor, self-abased, trembling lamb of the flock of Christ would reject such an experience as delusive and vain. And yet many of them will excuse themselves from bearing the yoke of their dear Lord, because they have not the same exercises. It is certainly the case that many if not all of God's children will recognize in others, evidences which they condemn in themselves, and ask for themselves such evidences as they would at once condemn in others.

But, to return to the consideration of our text, "*As many as walk*." Although many may seem to stand still, our text implies that there are some that walk, and on them the

peace and mercy of God is pronounced. But it is not only necessary that God's living children should walk, but it is still more important that they should walk correctly, uprightly, or according to the apostolic rule. Many may have a zeal which is not according to godliness. And the saints are commanded to withdraw themselves or turn away from every brother that walks disorderly. Not because they do not walk at all, but because they do not walk orderly. The feet of the ungodly are swift to shed blood, and many walk in forbidden paths, in a way that seems right unto a man, but the end of which are the ways of death. Some, in walking as described in the Scriptures, walk as those who go to the correction of the stocks, or as the young man of whom we read in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, who walked after the strange woman, not knowing that her house is the way to hell, leading down to the chambers of death. Some walk in the light of their own eyes, and of the sparks which they have themselves kindled, but from the hand of the Lord they shall lie down in sorrow.

As the apostle speaks of a rule by which the saints are to walk, how important it is that we search diligently for that rule. Where shall we find it? Whatever may be said in favor or against the rules of morality or religion, which have been adopted by good men or bad men, we certainly have a right to consider all rules unsafe for us, which are not clearly laid down in the Scriptures of truth by divine authority. The Old School Baptists profess to take the New Testament as our only infallible rule of faith and practice in all matters relating to the kingdom of Christ. Of the correctness and infallibility of this rule there can be no doubt. "To the word and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, [which is our rule] it is because there is no light in them." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And as the

Scriptures thoroughly furnish the man of God with a rule for every good work, no other rule can be required, as he has no other than good works to be engaged in, and it follows also that all works performed by any other rule, or not by the Scriptures, must be evil, as they cannot be god works. Many works of a religious pretention are reputed good by men of the present degenerate age, for which the Scriptures furnish neither rule nor authority. But the Scriptures reject all such as the works of darkness, the hidden things of dishonesty. How important it is that we work, as well as walk, according to the divine rule, since every man's work shall be tried so as by fire, and our God is a consuming fire. Nothing unauthorized by him will be accepted as obedience, or regarded as works of righteousness.

A rule is an exact measure; just so much and no more, therefore if we take the New Testament as our rule in religious matters, that rule requires us to observe all things whatsoever our Lord Jesus Christ has commanded, and as we are not allowed to do less, so we are equally reprehensible if we attempt to do more. To suppose that we can please God by doing what he has not commanded, or by leaving undone what he has commanded, is to set up our own wisdom above his, and thereby insult his divine majesty. The Judaizing teachers pretended to aim at a higher standard of holiness than that which was held forth in the gospel, but they entangled the saints with the yoke of bondage, and sadly bewitched some of them. When Israel of old had no king, every man did that which was good in his own eyes; but the spiritual Israel has a King, and if we were capable of judging for ourselves, we would need no rule. Inasmuch, therefore, as God has given a rule, it becomes us to walk according to it.

But it was our design to call the attention of our readers more particularly to the rule for the christian walk, as stated

in the chapter which contains our text, and its connection. The New Testament rule is introduced by Paul, in settling the disorders which disturbed the churches of Galatia; and having so applied the rule as to detect and expose the wickedness of the doctrines and commandments of men in religious matters, he proceeds to admonish the saints to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. That liberty he shows to be of a spiritual nature, and only to exist where the Spirit of the Lord is. He draws the contrast between the fruits of the Spirit and the lusts of the flesh, and presents the rule which requires the crucifixion of the flesh with the affections and lusts; "For," says he, "if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Walk after this rule and we shall not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. This rule is to be faithfully adhered to in our relative duties one with another. It reads thus: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual restore such an one." Here is the command. It is not given to the carnal, or to those christians who have not, or do not, crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts, but it is given to them what are spiritual. The rule will not allow any but the spiritual to be engaged in the restoration of erring saints. But not even the spiritual are to act, only in strict accordance with the rule. How then shall they restore such an one? Suppose they could restore the delinquent in any other way than that commanded, would that answer? Certainly not. The rule requires that it shall be done in the spirit of meekness. Why should this be so essential, seeing the erring brother is restored? Because the spiritual brother or brethren are liable also to be tempted, and there is no other safe course but strict adherence to the rule. Again, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." All this is to be done according to the rule; for he says, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit

reap life everlasting." How fearful the admonition! By laboring with carnal or fleshly motive, even in our professed labor to restore an erring brother or sister, although our brethren may be mocked, and think we have done our duty to the rule, according to the letter and spirit of the gospel, God is not mocked. His piercing eye detects the lack of humility in us, and the fleshly, selfish motives in our hearts, secreted from our brethren, and will assuredly turn on us a harvest of corruption. Well might the apostle say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." This is the rule on which the holy apostle insists, that outward circumcision, which is in the flesh, availeth nothing. He is not a Jew now, who is one outwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit, whose praise is not of men but of God. We are the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Here we see the spiritual and antitypical circumcision is the manifestation of the new creature, or the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, and hence it is said, "If any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." While then, the new creature and the old creature both exist in us, there is strife, and the rule demands that the old man be put off, and the new man be put on, and in this spiritual frame, with the flesh and its affections crucified, the world crucified to us, and we to the world, we are to walk in all the ordinances, laws and institutions of the house of our God. This is our rule, and the only divinely authorized rule for us. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

But in Paul's day there were "*Many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: whose mouths must be stopped; who subvert whole houses,*

teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." – Titus i. 10,11. They are all unruly who walk not according to this rule, and who depart from this rule, whatever they may substitute for it, are vain talkers and deceivers, and their influence has been sadly felt in the church at a much later date than that in which Paul wrote to Titus.

In conclusion, we will remark, "*This rule*," is in perfect harmony with the whole letter and spirit of the gospel of God our Savior. While the doctrine of the gospel teaches that salvation is wholly by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, this rule is applied only to them who are already saved, quickened and born of the Spirit. It excludes all the fruits of the flesh, and until we are born again we can bear no other than fruits of the flesh. First make the tree good, and its fruits will be good. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that comprehends all that we are or can be, or can produce until born again; and after the new birth, this rule excludes all the lusts of the flesh, and approves only of the fruits of the Spirit. This rule, therefore, calls for none of the works referred to as a means of procuring a new birth, but directs their manifestation as the evidence that they who are capable of walking according to this rule are certainly born of God, and led by the Spirit.

The unregenerate, and more particularly among them, the Arminian workmongers and will- worshipers, can see no reason why, if our doctrine be true, christians should work at all. They tell us that if they believed our doctrine, they would live as they list; they would take their fill of sin, and live upon the theory, once in grace always in grace. We are not at all surprised to hear them belch forth such doctrines, for these sentiments are the natural productions of the flesh, and show plainly that those who hold them have never been born again, and consequently possess within them no

fountain that can send forth any other streams than those selfish, muddy and polluted waters. The rule cannot apply to them, for if they should crucify their flesh with the affections and lusts thereof, there would be nothing of them left, it would use them up. But where God has implanted the spirit of immortality, the fruits of the Spirit will be produced in evidence thereof. Again, it is often slanderously reported that the doctrine of the gospel, as held by us, leads to inertness, if not to licentiousness. But those who are instructed in the school of Christ, know that the truth of the gospel and the practice of the gospel go harmoniously together; and the rule securing peace and blessedness to the Israel of God, unites the doctrine and practice of the gospel together. The immortal and incorruptible seed implanted in them, is born of God and loves holiness, loves truth, loves righteousness and loves all that is approved and lovely in the sight of God.

Middletown, N. Y.,
November 15, 1856
Elder Gilbert Beebe

GENERAL MEETINGS.

THERE appears to be a disposition manifested by our Old School brethren in various parts of the country to encourage a mutual interchange of sentiment, to take sweet counsel together, to walk to the house of the Lord in company; but not for the purpose of trying experiments upon the Holy One, nor with the expectation of aiding the Lord in the conversion of sinners.

When the children of Israel had departed from the law of the Lord and committed lewdness upon every high hill, and under every green tree, when they burned incense upon altars of brick, in violation of the command of God; when the number of nominal Israelites exceeded that of the stars for multitude, and the true Israelites were but a remnant according to the election of grace; “then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.” - Mal. iii. 16.

We had the pleasure of attending a meeting of this description on the 5th and 6th inst., and of enjoying a precious interview with a number of brethren from various parts of Zion, assembled with the church at Olive, Ulster Co., N. Y. The meeting was refreshing, the conversation edifying, and the preaching during the meeting was like Moses’ two silver trumpets - of a whole piece.

After the meeting was dismissed, and the brethren had gone every man to his tent, an anonymous letter was found lodged in the pulpit, demanding the signification of the term *Arminian.* The substance of this letter has been forwarded to us by a brother who wishes us to explain the matter.

In our use of the term Arminian, we mean all sech as believe that man, or men, can possibly aid in the salvation of souls.

This term was applied to the followers of Arminius, a professor at Leyden; and by general consent it has been subsequently applied to all such as deny the doctrine of divine sovereignty in the work of grace, and who hold the doctrine of a general atonement, offered salvation, human ability, human virtues, &c., as these sentiments are held by all the Protestant daughters of Mystery Babylon, we apply the term to them indiscriminately. The doctrine of human merit, however, did not originate with Arminius. It was first whispered to the progenitors of our race in the Garden of Eden, that they could by their works become as gods. The same doctrine was attempted to be enforced by coercive measures by Adam’s first born, and has existed from that early period until the present.

The editor of this paper was born an Arminian in the full sense of the term, and had he not been born again, he would have sunk down to hell in the full belief of that doctrine. Hence he has nothing whereof to boast. “Boasting is excluded, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
February 19, 1834.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 124 – 125

GENESIS I. 26

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

The plural form of the personal pronouns used in this text imply a plurality of personality engaged in the creation of the world. That God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, was in the work of creation, as the one only living, and the true God, to work of creation, as the one only living, and the true God, to us appears abundantly demonstrated. We are expressly told, "*And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*," and God said, "*Let there be light*," &c. That Christ as the Son of God, and mediatorial Head and Life of his church, was there, is equally certain, from the declaration, John i. 3, and Col. I. 16-18, and that the creation and formation of man, was designed especially to set forth Christ in a figure. We have never understood that man was to be like his Maker in every particular; God was to be the Creator, and man the creature, and consequently subject to the government, power and providence of the Creator. If man had been in the likeness of God, in relation to his eternal perfection's and peculiar attributes, he could not have fallen, for he would have been immutable. His fall proves to us, then, that it was not in that sense that he was made in the image of his Maker. That he came from the hand of his Creator, a pure, sinless being, and a perfect specimen of the workmanship of his God, is sufficiently clear, and that he remained in a state of a spotless innocence until he sinned, is beyond dispute. But we must remember that no creature or created perfection can compare with the uncreated perfection of the eternal God.

We are told in our text that "*God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness*." In the next verse we are told

that God created man in his image, in the image of God, he created he him, male and female, created he them. And in chapter iii. 22, the Lord God said, "*Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil*," &c. From all these, and many other portions of inspired truth, we infer that the image and likeness of God, in which Adam was created, consisted in his being created and formed, "the figure of him that was to come," which is Christ, according to Romans v. 14. To create Adam a figure of him that was to come, namely, a figure of Christ, was to create him in the likeness of Christ, so far as the figure is applicable; for Christ is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person. (Heb. i. 3). Paul declares to the church of God, that, "*We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.*" – Col. i. 14,15.

There are many things in the person and history of Adam, which fully justify Paul in declaring that he is the figure, or image of Christ. Let it be remembered that there can be no image without a figure, and that wherein a figure delineates its object, or prototype, is that wherein the imagery consists. Thus the image of a man may be made of a block of marble, by dressing the marble in such a manner as to fashion its form to the figure or likeness of a man, and yet the man is an animate, and the marble an inanimate, substance. Although the whole ceremonial economy abounded with images, or figures of the Messiah, yet Adam is emphatically the figure of him that was to come, which is Christ. Time and space will not allow us to trace even the outlines of this important image, but we will briefly notice a few of the most prominent of them. First, as being vested with universal, temporal dominion, over all the animal creation, he prefigured him that was to come, whose spiritual dominion should be from the rivers to the ends of the earth, who should have all power in heaven and earth, and power over

all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. The manner of his creation, "*Male and female, created he them*" teaches us the important doctrine of the creation of the church of God, in Christ, and her standing in him from everlasting. Not only Eve, the bride of Adam, but all their posterity was created in Adam, were embodied in him, and their manifestation are the multiplication, or development, of Adam, and in this he was a very striking image or type, of our Lord Jesus Christ; for Paul says of the church, "*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*" – Eph. ii. 10. Adam said of his bride which was created in him, after her distinct formation, "*This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man*." – Gen. ii. 23. Paul says, "*No man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*" – Eph. v. 29,30. Again, Eve and all the human family were created in him, for, "*This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name. Adam, in the day when they were created.*" – Gen. v. 1,2. So also it is written, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." – Eph. iii. 14,15. As the married wife is known by her husband's name, and as all legitimate children have an inheritance in the name of their father, so all the members of Christ are interested in his name. It is only in his name they can approach the Father, receive the Spirit, or inherit the promises of the new covenant. His name is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee and find safety. In his name they trust; in it they preach, pray, sing and exhort, and in that name is all their hope, and all their salvation.

We have thus briefly given our views, on the question, of wherein consisted the image and likeness in which Adam was created. How far any brother may be able to form his conclusions as to what man was, and what he lost by the fall, we cannot say; but among all his losses, we are nowhere in the Scriptures told that he lost the image in which he was created. But after the transgression of man the Lord God said, "*Behold, the man has become as one of us*," and if he has lost the image, and ceased to be the figure of Christ, it must have happened subsequently to the date of Paul's epistle to the Romans, for up to that time Paul used the present tense, in declaring that Adam is (not was) the figure of him that was to come.

Middletown, N. Y.,
August 15, 1855.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

GENESIS 1:27; 2:5

New Hope, KY., Jan. 8, 1861

Brother Beebe: - Will you or brother Leonard Cox, Jr., give your views either privately or through the *Signs,* on Gen. i. 27, and also on chapter ii. and last clause of the 5th verse? and may God bless you, my brother, and oblige yours,

J. E. SETTLE.

Reply: - There is probably enough in the Scriptures proposed for consideration to engage the best abilities of all the brethren. We do not wish to prevent brother Cox giving his views on the subject, but will leave enough for him when we have said all we can upon these Scriptures.

Gen. i. 27: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."
Gen. ii. 5th verse, and last clause: "And there was not a man to till the ground."

Some have supposed that after the Lord God had created man, there still was not a man found to till the ground, but we should observe that in the first of these passages we have an account of the creation, and in the other, of the generations of the heavens and of the earth. Although a record of the creation is fully given in the first chapter, in order to relate the generations of the heavens and earth, it was necessary to recapitulate the origin of man, which in the second chapter fully accords with the record in the first. That the man formed, Gen. ii. 7, is the same man created, Gen. i. 27, for the Lord God blessed him, and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, &c. That this man created and formed is the same of whom it is written,

"This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him. Male and female created he them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created." - Gen. v. 1, 2. The terms, *created, formed* and *made,* are used in ascribing the origin of man to the creative power and workmanship of the Lord God. God who had the power to create, form and make man of the dust of the ground, had power also to give to him the decree, multiply and replenish, &c. He spake the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. This man was by the order of his Creator to multiply, and accordingly without any further creation has been constantly multiplying, and all the millions of his posterity for nearly six thousand years are but the multiplication of the one man which God created, formed and made out of the dust of the ground. In mathematics, multiplication differs very widely from addition. Man has accumulated nothing in the six thousand years of his history, but has been from the birth of Cain constantly developing what was embodied in him at his creation. And this principle of multiplication is exemplified in every part of the vegetable creation. Every green thing which God caused to grow out of the earth, contained in it the seed for its propagation. How awfully grand and sublime is the contemplation of the infinity of God, displayed in his perfect knowledge of all the myriads created in the one man, Adam, embracing all nations of men who dwell on all the face of the earth, and he hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation. (Acts xvii. 26.)

But we are not only informed that the Lord God created man, and in him created all the human family, and appointed each descendant of Adam, the bounds of his habitation, and time of his development, but we are also told that the Lord God created man in his own image and likeness. From this declaration some have inferred that man was like God in regard to the perfections of the Deity. But although man in

his creation was without sin, until he transgressed the law of his Creator, his sinless innocence was not to be compared with the immutable holiness of God. Man was capable of sinning, as his history has painfully demonstrated, while his Creator's perfections are unchangeable. Not only so, but the wisdom, power, truth, justice, omniscience and independence of God were and are peculiar to himself, and have never been found in any of his creatures. What is an image? It is something visible, that can be seen. The supreme and eternal Godhead is invisible to finite beings, and he is called the "Invisible God." No man hath seen his face at any time. But we read that "God was manifest in the flesh," and that our Lord Jesus Christ, in his Mediatorial relations, is the image of the invisible God. That he, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. That he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and as God only reveals himself to us in and through Christ, and as the Father is in Christ, and Christ is in the Father, he that hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. Every perfection of the Father is fully deliniated in him who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

We speak of Christ in his Mediatorial glory, as the image of the invisible God, while at the same time we hold that he, in his essential Godhead, is the very Lord God, whose attributes are so clearly portrayed in him as the divine Mediator. He is as truly God, as he is truly Mediator between God and man, hence the creation of the world, and the salvation of his church, are both ascribed to him. See John i. 3, "All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Also, Col. i. 15-17, "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created

by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Hence he is the very Lord God who created man, as declared in our text; while as the Mediatorial Head of the church, he is the image or perceptible manifestation of the eternal Deity, which is in every other sense invisible to us.

If, then, we hold that Christ is, as the Scriptures declare, the express image of the invisible God, how was man created in the image and likeness of the Creator? To our mind the explanation of the inspired apostle, Rom. v. 14, is satisfactory. In this text Paul declares that Adam is the *figure* of him that was to come, and in the connection shows that Christ was "Him that was to come." And as we have shown that Christ is the Lord God who created Adam and all things in heaven and in earth, it is enough to know that Adam was constituted in his creation, the figure or image of Christ, to show that he was created in the image of his Creator. A sculptor may from a block of marble carve a perfect image of a living man, but he cannot inspire it with the life or animation of a living man, and so there were many images or figures of him that was to come, contained in the Old Testament types. So Adam, though a mere creature, wholly dependent on God for support, and liable to fall, to sin, and then to die, still "is the figure of him that was to come," that is, Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is not necessary that we should now attempt to trace the analogy of the type and anti-type, the figure, and the body which it represents, the image and the original, designed to be represented. Look at man, as presented in the character of an image, and what do we see?

First. In the earliest presentation he stands a unit, embodying a multitude which no man can number, thus an emblem of the Mediator which is One, and but one, and yet

in him God has secured a people which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

Second. Adam was the federal head and legal representative of all the human family, before Eve was formed, or any of his posterity born, and in that unity and identity of human life, in his transgression they all were made sinners, even so do we find in Christ the spiritual life of all the spiritual seed, so identified that he is emphatically the life of all his people, and the unity and identity so perfect that by his obedience to the law, all that he embodied in his Mediatorial headship of the church, are made righteous. See Rom. v. 14-21.

Third. As our text says, "Male and female created he them." And in Gen. v. 1, 2. "This is the Book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called *their* name Adam, in the day when they were created." Then turn to the Book of the generation of the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, and read, Psa. xxii. 30, "A seed shall serve him, it shall be counted to the Lord for a generation." Also, Psa. cxxxix. 15, 16, "My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy Book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." "Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me to do thy will, O God!" Psa. xi. 7; Hebrews x. 7-9, compared 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Again: Who can contemplate the creation of the bride, and all the posterity of Adam in him, to make their development in his own likeness, their future destiny established in him, and then when Eve had received her formation, was beguiled by

the serpent, was in the transgression, and read the account of Adam following her in the transgression, receiving the fruit at her hand, that he might legally share the penalty with her, and fail to see in all this that Adam is the figure of him that was to come?

We have not time nor space to devote farther to this subject now, but trust we have left ample room for the more able comments of brother Cox, or any other brother who may do better justice to the subject.

Middletown, N. Y.,
January 15, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pgs. 448 – 452

GENESIS II. 7.

DEAR BRETHREN Beebe: – My mind has been exercised for some weeks on Genesis ii. 7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." If not asking too much, will you give your views through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES on the above quotation, especially the latter clause? By so doing, you will greatly oblige a constantly are of the SIGNS.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
S. JORDAN.
Peytona, Kentucky., Jan. 24, 1880.

REPLY: – Although many conflicting theories have been promulgated in regard to the creation of the world, the formation and animation of man, and many have attempted to explain the elements of which the nature of man consists, we doubt the possibility of making the subject any more plain than the inspired record, in which God, as declared by the pen of Moses, has left it. According to the chronology of the scriptures, Moses lived and wrote the account of the creation of the heavens and earth and all that they contain about twenty - three hundred years after their creation; consequently we conclude the whole account given by him was made known to him by the immediate and infallible inspiration of god; and it appears him pious to us for any man to attempt to enlarge upon, improve, or controverted what God has said on this or on any other subject. What was thus written aforetime in the holy scriptures was written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. – Rom. xv. 4. Thus the scriptures were written for nobler and more sacred purpose than to gratify our speculative curiosity and regarded the

history of past events. When we consider the heavens as the workmanship of God, and the firmament showing his handiwork, humbled, and yet transported in the contemplation, we cry out, “What is man, that thou are mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?” – Psalm viii. 4. Next in gradation, but of the lower than the angels, he was made, and crowned with the Glory in all honor of dominion over the works of his Maker. His elevation as a man, his transgression as a center, and his humiliation when driven out of the garden, all are calculated to excite wonder that any of his fallen and depraved progeny should be regarded by the Creator in mercy, were visited by him in love. We attempt to scan the firmaments above and below, and we learn how feeble are hour perceptive powers. Above, below, and all around us are evidences of infinite wisdom and almighty power, and a strong an irresistible conviction fastens on our little minds, There is a Being supremely glorious, infinite in power and majesty, who is made all things for himself, whose indisputable write it is to govern, control and hold the destiny of all things, all beings in all invents in his own sovereign hands. And when we are informed by the testimony of God himself that all things were made by and for him, whose name is called the Word of God, we truly through comfort of the scriptures have hope. Nor can we doubt that he whose hands have garnished the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth can sustain the truth of his declaration, that all power in heaven and in earth is in his hands, and he is therefore abundantly able to keep securely all that we have committed to him, and therefore, also, we have hope.

In all that was called into existence by the creative power and wisdom of God in the six days of the creation of the natural heavens and earth, there is most undoubtedly typified the spiritual creation of the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; but of these things

we cannot now speak more fully, as we are called to express such views as we have of the text which we have placed at the head of this article, especially on the Las clause of the text.

“and the Lord God,” the supreme Jehovah, “formed man of the dust of the ground;” or as the margin renders it, *the dust of the ground*, omitting the word *of*. The name Adam, which was given, signifies, *earthy man; red*. And this agrees with what God said to him after the transgression, “*For dust thou art*.” It also agrees with the words of Paul, “The first man is of the earth, earthy.” – 1 Cor. XV. 47. This was his name at the time of his formation, and by this name he was called by his Creator after the transgression. Now formed, *Dust of the ground*, before he was inspired with vitality, he was formed; but although formed and called a man, or Dust of the ground, we presume he remained inanimate until God breathed into him the breath of life; then man became a living soul. The manner in which God, who is a cap spirit, breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, is not explained, nor is it necessary for us to know, but we presume it was by the same word of his power which called all things into existence; for as God is a cap spirit, we do not understand that he himself in hills and exhales the air, in the manner or sense in which his creatures do. This much, however, seems clear and certain, that he caused man to breathe by inhaling the air and his nostrils. Some have contended that the breath of God was so imparted to man, that man in its reception became a partaker of the immortality of God; but we’re told that Christ only hath immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16), and that both man and beast all have one breath, and in that respect there is no difference. – Eccl. iii. 19. But it is said of man that he *became a living soul*. True; but the same is also said of all the animal creation: “And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the year, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

wherein there is life," (or as rendered in the margin it will read, wherein there is *a living soul*). – See Gen i. 30, and observe the marginal rendering of this, and also of verse 20, same chapter. Tradition makes the word *soul* to mean something proceeding from the breath of the Creator and partaking of his nature, which is immortal, and which is imparted to man, distinguishing him from other created living beings; and we also had regarded the soul as some undefinedable element or constituent part of man, by which he is distinguished from all other living beings, until hour attention was called to the marginal readings, before referred to, by a brother in Liverpool, England. Whenever maybe the application of the word soul in other parts of the scriptures, if the marginal renderings in these passages are correct, it is here you simply to mean vitality, and all living beings are here called living souls. That man is destined two an interminable existence we firmly believe, and that his spirit go upward when separated in death from the body, while the spirits or souls of the beasts go with downward with their bodies to the dust, we believe is taught in the scripture; but who know what the spirit of the one or of the other? Of man it is said, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: in the spirit shall return unto god who gave it." – Ecclesiastes xii. 7. And when the dust shall be returned to the earth, and the spirit to God, that perpetuated state of man shall be as God shall direct, in that destiny which the just and holy God has ordained.

Brother Jordan has asked for our views on the subject, and such views as we yet present have, though but the views of a pour fallible worm of the dust, fully as liable to err as others are, we freely submit them to his consideration, desiring that he and our readers generally may receive them only so far as they are sustained by the scriptures of divine truth.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 10.
May 15, 1880.

GENESIS 2:10

Brother Beebe: - According to your receipts, as published, you must feel the pressure of the hard times, as we also do; but I hope the Lord will sustain you, and keep you from all the delusions of the world. Please give your views on Gen. 2:10, "And a river went out of Eden *to* water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads." Now our branches come from different sources, and unite in one; but it appears this river parted, but became into four heads.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Samuel Seitz

REPLY: Eden signifies pleasure, or delight, and may represent, figuratively, heaven the paradise of God, or the throne of God and the Lamb, from whence John saw a pure river of life proceeding, clear as crystal. The garden in like manner may represent the church of God, which is frequently called a garden, the garden of the Lord. Truly the church of God is watered and refreshed by the pure water of life which comes to her from the throne or government of God and the Lamb; that is, the Mediatorial throne of our Redeemer. This is the River, the streams whereof make glad the city, or garden of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. The channel, course, and direction of the waters of life are not governed by the laws of nature, but by the sovereign power of that throne from whence they proceed. All earthly or natural streams and rivers with which we are familiar receive contributions from various branches which empty into them, swelling and increasing them. But the river of life flowing to the church of God is full and sufficient of itself, and can admit of no supplies from any other source. And, as it is designed to reach every department of the Garden of the Lord, it is divided, in an experimental sense, into four heads,

answering to the four points of the compass, like the molten sea in the temple, placed on twelve molten oxen, with their faces towards the east, the west, the north, and the south. Thus we see in the figure that our glorious Lord is the place of broad rivers and streams, etc. We have neither time nor space to enlarge, but submit the above to brother Seitz.

Middletown, N.Y.,
June 1,1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 210 - 211

GENESIS 3:15

Brother Beebe: - Please give your views on Genesis 3:15: "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heal."

Pleasant Cox
Hancock County, Illinois
January 29,1864

Freely confessing our utter inability to comprehend, much less to elucidate the subject proposed, in all its ramifications, we will only attempt to give such views as we have, and in as intelligible a manner as we may be enabled to do, and leave brother Cox, and all others who may feel interested, to examine and compare our views with the Scriptures, which we regard as our only safe and infallible directory and guide, and we feel most sensibly that even the Scriptures can afford no clear light to our dark understanding any farther than it shall please God to open them to us by his Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures present two grand, sublime and, to finite minds, incomprehensible mysteries. The one is called "the mystery of godliness," and, without controversy, it is very great. The other is of an opposite character, and is called "the mystery of iniquity," which now worketh, long has worked, and shall continue to work, until the mystery of God shall be finished, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, as God hath declared to his servants, the prophets. (Rev. 10:7) These are both called mysteries, because they are too profound for the limited understanding of the sons of men; they baffle the wisdom of the wise and confound the understanding of the great, the learned and the prudent. These two mysteries were launched upon the world in the beginning, in the morning of the creation, and destined to

run their parallel, yet opposite courses, both under the direct supreme power and government of him who reigns God over all, and blessed forevermore. To ask of us to solve these mysteries, to lift the impenetrable veil which God has thrown over them, and so simplify and explain them as to make them clear and plain to the understanding of men, would be to ask of a finite being that which none but God himself has power to do; but this our brother has not asked, he calls only for our views, and, feeble though they are, we attempt to give them.

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman." These words are preceded by a dreadful and irrevocable curse, pronounced upon the serpent, and may be regarded, so far as the serpent is involved, as a part of the curse: "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field: upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman," etc. The two characters named (the serpent and the woman) were, literally, present before the Lord, to hear from his mouth their respective judgments. Whatever may be said of the serpent, as a beast of the field, and included among the cattle which God had made, or whatever questions may arise as to his form, motive, power, food, etc., we must leave to the speculative mind of the curious, as we have no opinion to offer beyond what is written. It is, however, plainly stated that he was a serpent, having among the creatures of God, a corporeal body, of material substance, which, being made of the dust of the ground, could be sustained and fed upon the same, even of the dust in its crude or unvegetated state. The sustenance of all earthly creatures is by vegetation, and animal life from the dust, every green herb and every tree yielding fruit to be his meat or food, but the serpent is doomed to eat dust itself, all of which, to our mind, has an important significance of which we may speak hereafter. The

serpent is repeatedly mentioned in the Scriptures, and among the creatures of God, and from this serpent in the garden, we presume, all that species of reptiles which still infest the earth have emanated. But it is not, in our understanding of the subject, as a mere animal that the serpent is here presented, but as possessing more subtilety than any of the beasts of the field which the Lord God had made; that subtile, unholy, delusive and beguiling spirit which the serpent possessed to a greater extent than any other of the beasts of the field, is what characterizes him as the father of lies and king over all the children of pride. In his mystical character and career, then, we may consider him as the spirit that works in the children of disobedience, as beguiling unstable souls, as going about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. In this character he is called the devil, and Satan that deceiveth. (Rev. 12:9) This certainly is the serpent which deceived Eve, and, through her, the whole world of mankind. And again, he is still more fully identified as "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan." (Rev. 20:2) We have no account of any older serpent than that serpent which deceived Eve, and, through her, the whole world, and who still is deceiving the whole world. Many names are applied to him in the Scriptures, as the dragon, leviathan, Apollyon, murderer, father of lies, adversary, etc.

Having thus far identified the serpent on whom the curse was pronounced, we will offer a few thoughts in regard to the woman with whom he is brought into collision by the curse and her seed. The woman is easily identified as the only woman then brought into existence or manifestation, the wife of Adam, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and called woman because she was taken out of man. And Adam called her name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. The apostle Paul informs us that the man was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression, and in

Eph. 5:22-33, he transfers the figure to Christ and the church. "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." The woman literally considered, is a part of Adam, and the mother of all his posterity. Beguiled by the serpent, she is in the transgression, betrayed, ensnared, guilty of disobedience to God, naked, ruined and condemned to die, without the least particle of power or ability to avert the ruin in which she was involved' and all her posterity included in her guilt shame. But as the emblematic bride of the Lamb of God we find in her person, her names, her circumstances and in all particulars a typical personification of the bride and wife of the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. We are expressly told (Romans 5:14) that Adam is the figure of him that was to come. A figure is a type, an emblem, an image, a representation. We are not told that Adam was the figure, but he is, still continues to be, the image of him that was (not is) to come. In I Cor. 15:45-49, the same apostle says, "And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

It is interesting and comforting, as well as instructive to the children of God, to trace the numerous points of analogy between the woman as the type, or figure, and the church of God, to whom those resemblances point, but in this article we must restrict our remarks to only a few of them. The woman was created in the earthy Adam; the church of God is created in the second, or antitypical Adam. The woman was preserved in Adam, and so the election of grace is sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.

Adam said of his wife, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Christ, by the mouth and pen of his inspired apostle, said to the church, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. 5:30) The life of Adam was the life of Eve, before as well as after she was formed and brought into manifestation, and she never had any vitality independent of him. Even so the church of God existed in Christ, a participant of his immortality, before the world began. Her life was with the Father, and was given to her in the Son, and is hid with Christ in God, and she has not one particle or pulsation of spiritual, immortal and eternal life independent of him. One striking point of analogy appears in the response of Adam to the summons of his creator, which, to our mind, is full of thrilling interest: "The woman whom thou gayest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." (Gen. 3:12) This was not, as we conceive, to throw the blame on the woman, nor on God, nor to exculpate himself, but the words were inspired and prophetic; she was identified with him. If God had not given her to him he had no power to possess her, and if she had not been given to be with him the world could not have been peopled, nor could the designs of God to develop his purpose and grace in the salvation of millions of mankind been accomplished. But mark the figurative import of his words, as coming from the lips of Christ: "Thine they were, and thou gayest them me." "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day." "She gave me of the tree, and I did eat." "Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression." How stood the case? The woman was in the transgression, and must surely die; she could not come back to Adam. Was it the design that they should be forever separated, that Eve should die and Adam live? How could that be when their life was identical? What then was the alternative? Au, there was a purpose of God involved that could not be thwarted. She was given to be with him, and

although she had no power to return to him, he had power and love and inclination to go to her, to follow her into the transgression, and so she gave to him of the tree, and he did eat. So the church, given to Christ in irrevocable covenant, was designed to be with him, and she shall ultimately reign with him in unfading glory and immortality. But in order to secure this glorious ultimatum, when she, beguiled, betrayed and ensnared by the subtilety of the devil, was in the transgression, condemned by the holy law of God, condemned and under wrath, without the power to return, ultimately without strength even then, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, did not forget the object and immutable purpose of the gift, and although he was not, could not be deceived, he received from her of the tree (which was a figure of the law), and he did eat. For in being made of a woman, he was made under the law, and subject to its demands. Thus at her hand he received of the tree and did eat. He was legally numbered with the tranagressors, and bare the sins of many. Though he knew no sin, yet he was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. The earthy Adam had no power to take his life again, for, lest he should put forth his hand and eat and live forever, he was sent forth, driven out, and cherubims and this flaming sword Jesus, our second Adam, encountered, and received the dreadful stroke. It smote the Man that was God's fellow, and was bathed in his atoning blood. But having laid down his life he was able to take it again, and, diffusing that resurrection life through all the members of his body, his bride, he bore her with him to the heavenly places, to live and reign with him in immortal glory.

Having devoted as much space as we can afford to the consideration of the serpent, we will offer a few remarks on their respective seed, and first, the seed of the serpent. The serpent, as a mere animal of corporeal form and animal life, is the progenitor of all the reptiles on the earth or in the sea

known as serpents, vipers, dragons, leviathans, etc., and in this sense the serpent's seed is as distinct from the human family as any other classification of the beasts of the field, fowls of the air or monsters of the deep waters. When men are spoken of as serpents, vipers and children of their father the devil, it is not that they are so by natural generation, or corporeal substance, but in their being in possession of the spirit, subtilety, guile and wickedness of Satan. For example, we are told of Cain that he was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. (I John 3:12) There is a sense in which Cain, and many others of the human family, are of that wicked one, but it is not as creatures, for the devil has no creative power, and we have already proved that God is the sole Creator of all mankind; neither is it by natural generation, for God has made all men of one blood. Now Cain, although he was of that wicked one, yet he was begotten of the same father, and conceived and born of the same mother that Abel and Seth were. We are expressly told that Cain was begotten by Adam and born of Eve, and hence was a brother of Abel, whom he slew, but religiously Cain was of that wicked one, and had no affinity or fellowship with the spirit and faith of Abel. As a religionist Cain was a type of all false and ungodly religionists, of whom an inspired apostle says, "Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gain-saying of Core." (Jude 11) Those scribes and Pharisees whom John refused to baptize were called a generation of vipers, although they had Abraham to their father, according to the flesh. Others were denounced by our Savior as serpents, vipers, and even children of the devil. "They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man," etc. Jesus said to them, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is

our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye can not hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:33-a) Here we have what we regard as a clear illustration of what is meant by their being children of the devil; not in their human organization, or natural generation, but the spirit which was in them was of the devil. As men he knew they were the seed of Abraham, but in their spirit, or religion, they were not Abraham's children, they had not the faith of Abraham, and were not born of the Spirit which distinguished Abraham, or they would do the works of Abraham. The truth is, the children of the devil are those who have and are governed by the spirit of the devil. The devil himself is a wicked spirit, and cannot beget matter or material substance, nor can that spirit beget any quality that it does not itself possess. Such are the laws of generation. Adam begat a son in his own likeness. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh [it is not spirit] and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit [it is not flesh]." As Satan is a wicked spirit, so he is the father of all wicked spirits. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," and as many as are led by the spirit of the devil, are children of the devil. Neither their being born of God, nor of Satan, changes their relation to the earthy Adam, for all are alike in that relation. The evidence of sonship, on the one hand, is, "As many as

are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" that Spirit of which they are born again bears witness with their spirit that they are the sons, or children, of God; they bear his image, not in the flesh, but in the spirit of their mind, wherewith they serve the law of God. While, on the other hand, the evidence of being children of the devil is, that his children have his spirit. He was a murderer from the beginning, and their feet are swift to shed blood. Misery and destruction are in all their ways, and there is no fear of God before their eyes, and their murderous, destructive, heaven-daring, God-defying, truth-hating and grace-despising propensities clearly show who is the father of the spirit and religion they possess. "I know," said Jesus, "that ye are Abraham's seed: but ye seek to kill me." Enemies of Jesus, enemies of his cause, of his truth, of his word, of his people, yea, enemies of God by wicked works. That Satan does beget his spirit in his children, and that his spirit conforms them to his image and makes them like him, and subjects them to his final and everlasting doom, we think will not be disputed by any who are governed by the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. All the righteous blood of the prophets and saints shall be required of that generation of vipers, who are of their father, the devil, and who do the works of their father. It was this spirit in Cain which moved him to kill Abel, and this same spirit, in the same family, is at this day drenching the earth in human gore and filling our land with widows and orphans, with lamentation, mourning and woe. It is this spirit of devils through which the smoke and venom of hell is belched forth like the flaming vomitings of Vesuvius, in opposing the people of God and the principles of holiness, which devils hate and in which saints delight. O may we try the spirits, whether they be of God, and beware what manner of spirit we are of.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Republished: The Remnant
Volume 3, No. 5 – September – October, 1989

GENESIS 3:22,23

Elder G. Beebe; Dear Sir: If you have light on the subject, and time to write, and space for publication, please give your views on Genesis 3:22,23, especially on the latter part: "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken."

Ephraim J. Pemberton,
Rushville, Ill.
December 21, 1864.

Without claiming any extraordinary light on the true figurative import of the words of this text, we will venture to give such views as we have on the subject, hoping they may serve to enlighten those who are anxiously inquiring after the truth, and, if nothing more, lead them to a close examination of the Scriptures.

We do not understand the account given of the creation of the world, the entrance of sin, the fall of man and the early propagation of his seed, etc., to have been written as a mere history of events to gratify the prying curiosity of men in the subsequent ages of the world. The book of Genesis is not a record of facts noted as they transpired and so transmitted to posterity, like all profane history, but written by Moses more than two thousand years after the creation of the world. As Moses wrote by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, we infer not only the sacred truth of what is written as the testimony of God himself, but also that the sacred import of the record is, like all other parts of divine revelation, the opening of the mouth of God in parables, and the uttering of dark sayings, and all designed to be made plain in due time to the

expanding understanding of the children of God by the same Spirit which inspired Moses to write. Instead then of reading it as a mere literal history of events, we regard every line and every word as the inspiration of God himself, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things which are to be fulfilled in the fullness of the dispensation of times. A clear understanding of these early records will show to the divinely instructed pupil in the school of Christ a perfect and beautiful cluster of types pointing to Christ, and the salvation of his church and people, in which the two parallel mysteries, godliness and iniquity, are strikingly developed. Had we the ability, the time and space, we would review the whole record from Genesis 1:1 to the text on which we are now requested to bestow our attention, but we must let it suffice for the time, to express some thoughts on the expulsion of man from the garden of Eden, and some things therewith connected. First, God in his triune relation as Father, Word and Spirit, not as three Gods, but the only true and living God, revealed in creation, providence and grace, created the world by the Word, for, “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God (Hebrews 11:3).” “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Hebrews 1:1,2).” This accounts for the plural form of the pronoun: “Let us make man in our image.” And in our text, “Behold, the man is become as one of us.” Christ is declared to be the image of the invisible God, and the express image of his person, and the brightness of his glory (see Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3), and Adam is the figure of him that was to come (Romans 5:14). Man was not, as we understand, directly the image of the invisible God, but was made after that image, a facsimile, a figure, a type of Christ; “after our likeness.” Not like God in infinity, immortality or deity, but as a figure of the dominion of Christ

over all created things, having dominion over the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea and every creeping thing, etc. Nor do we understand that his created elements or perfections were like the uncreated attributes of his Creator, for then he could not have fallen, but the likeness and image was confined to his being the figure of him that was to come, that is, of Christ. Not only as lord over the animal creation, but also as the head of a posterity which God had created in him, also in his identity with his bride, and finally in all that is recorded of him in the Scriptures; he was the first Adam, Christ the second Adam. But let us not mistake, for that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural, but afterward that which is spiritual, as seen in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam was of the earth earthy, his antitype is heavenly; the first was natural, the last spiritual; the first was made a living soul, the second is a quickening Spirit.

Second, the first estate of man. "And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." Here in an earthly paradise, which is also figurative of the church or garden of the Lord, man in his primeval rectitude was placed by his Creator, surrounded with every comfort for the eye and for the taste, all planted by the Lord God himself, and growing luxuriantly without the labor of man, and all perfectly adapted to the condition of man in his original purity, yet man was natural, and the garden natural, and all their surroundings were natural. In this consisted the adaptation, for if the garden and its trees, its plants and fruits, had been spiritual, they could neither have been pleasant to his sight nor good for food. As a natural man he could not see or discern spiritual things, nor could his natural and earthly

nature have subsisted on spiritual food, yet Adam, being natural, could and did prefigure Him that is spiritual; and so also did the garden and trees, plants, rivers, etc., being natural, prefigure the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this garden was found every tree and everything that was pleasant to the sight, or good for food, or that could contribute to the support and comfort of man in his then present condition, but of these we propose to notice two trees which are particularly mentioned, and to show what they particularly represented.

1. The tree of life is mentioned, which was in the midst of the garden. This tree was among those of which man had permission to eat freely, and so long as he continued to eat of it, and obeyed the command of God to touch not, taste not and handle not the tree of knowledge of good and evil, it was to him the tree of life, for without transgression he could not die. The figurative allusion points to the tree of life, of which Christ is the Root and the Offspring (Revelation 22:2,14,16), the type being natural and the antitype spiritual.

2. The tree of knowledge of good and evil, being the only tree or thing in the garden that man was forbidden to touch or taste, is appropriately called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for man without touching or tasting it could not have known evil, any more than we could have known sin except the law had said, “Thou shalt not covet.” But in partaking of it man became a sinner, and with his transgression death entered and passed on all the unborn posterity, which, being in him, were involved in the transgression, and consequently to the knowledge of evil. This tree, we understand, was designed to represent the law of God, the transgression of which brings guilt, condemnation and death to the offenders. In support of this position we assume, and shall endeavor to show, that the law of God answers to this figure, beyond all doubt or controversy.

It is a tree of knowledge of sin; of evil. “The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law (I Corinthians 15:56).” Where there is no law there can be no transgression, for sin is the transgression of the law. Hence it is written, By the deeds of the law no flesh living shall be justified in the sight of God. In perfect agreement, as we conceive, with the application of the figure were the circumstances connected with the giving of the law at Sinai. Three days before the descent of the Lord to proclaim his law he commanded Moses to sanctify the people of Israel, and to admonish them to come not up to touch the mountain on pain of death. “And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live (Exodus 19:12,13).” And after Moses had faithfully given this charge, and the time appointed had come, the Lord called Moses to him and again sent him down to repeat the solemn warning: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down; and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee; but let not the priests and the people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them.” (Exodus 19:21-24; compared with Hebrews 7:18-21) How remarkable the coincidence when we compare the charge given to Adam (Genesis 2:17) and the charge given as copied above concerning Mount Sinai. The law of God, as given to Adam in this figure, and as reiterated in its covenant and perceptive form by Moses, clearly shows that no man can approach unto God by the law, for it could not give life, or righteousness should have been by it, but it

is the ministration of death. An apostle tells us that the law is not made for a righteous man, and again that the law entered that the offence might abound, and that sin might appear exceeding sinful. So we see that man while in innocence could have no knowledge of evil, and consequently could not by comparing know good and evil, or good from evil.

Third. We now propose to show that Adam in partaking of the tree of knowledge, as in every other incident recorded of him, was the figure of him that was to come. Eve, who was created in Adam, and a part of himself, bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, and called woman, because she was taken out of the man, living in his vitality and existing in his flesh and bones, bore the same natural relationship to him that the church of God does of spiritual relation and identity to the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. For we are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. And as Eve was the bride, the wife of Adam in this figure, so the church of God, which was created in the second Adam, was and is the bride, the Lamb's wife, his body, his flesh and his bones. In this presentation of the figure let us trace the analogy in a few particulars. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression (I Timothy 2:13,14)." Was it not even so in the application of these words to Christ and the church? Might not our apostle here add, as in Ephesians 5:32, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church?" Certainly Christ in identifying himself with the transgression of the church was not deceived. Well did he count the cost; well did he know that in bearing the sins of his people he must die, and for that very purpose came he into the world, and was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. Well did he know that to redeem his church unto God he must be

made sin for her, that he must bear her sins in his own body on the tree. Now hear what Adam said when arraigned in judgment, and imagine his words as uttered prophetically as from the lips of Christ, the second Adam: “The woman whom thou gayest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” Some have fancied themselves wise enough to tell us what were the thoughts and design of Adam in using these nineteen words, instead of frankly acknowledging the truth in a single word. Some have concluded that his object was to charge the blame on Eve, or on the Creator himself, for having given him such a wife, but we confess that our line is too short to reach the thoughts and intents of Adam’s mind; but whatever they were, we read in them a prophecy of the Husband of the church of God. “Thine they were, and thou gayest them me.” For what purpose were they given him? This is the will of the Father, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing. And, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world (John 17:24).”

Now let us consider the circumstances of Adam’s complicity with his wife in the transgression. How stood the case? Did not Adam tell the truth in saying that God gave him the woman to be with him as a companion and help-meet for him? God had said, It is not good for man to be alone; I will make him a help-meet for him. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man made he a woman, and brought her unto the man; and Adam said, “This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” The design of God that she should be with him, as a help-meet for him, and that through them to people this world, is too apparent to admit of

contradiction, and the type with equal clearness applies to the spiritual Adam, and Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, and the mother of all the promised seed, designed to people the new heaven and new earth, wherein dwells righteousness. Shall we now indulge in vain speculation, and suppose Adam, being not deceived, had refused to follow Eve into the transgression? What then? Eve is involved in sin, she must be driven out of the garden alone and forbidden to eat of the tree of life; a separation final and everlasting must have followed. Adam in innocence could not go with her, Eve in transgression could not return to Adam. Suppose again, when the bride elect of Christ, beguiled by the old serpent, had fallen under the curse of the righteous law of God, the heavenly Bridegroom had resolved to let her go. An indissoluble union must then have been broken, a purpose of the immutable God must have failed, and the Bridegroom and the bride irrecoverably put asunder. Did Adam love his guilty bride? Did Jesus love his fallen and law-condemned people? Though Eve could not return to Adam, Adam could go to her, and such was the strength of his love, stronger than death, it was the only alternative. Rather than part, he plunges with her into death, that the union may be perpetuated. And hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth. God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Thus far, then, the figure bears in its application to Christ and his church. Truly, “He hates putting away.” Once more: How was Adam involved in the transgression of Eve? Simply by receiving at the hand of his erring wife the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which we have taken to represent the law, and eating thereof, and by doing this came legally under the penalty of that law, and irrevocably doomed to die on that selfsame day, and do we not see the application of the figure to our divine Redeemer? He lived

and reigned above the law that his people had transgressed, but to carry out the eternal purpose that, where he is, there his church shall be also. He bowed his heavens and came down. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law. At the hand of his church he receives the fruits of the tree, or law; he who knew no sin is made sin for us, that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. His children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also likewise takes part of the same. His people are transgressors, he is voluntarily numbered with the transgressors, and the iniquities of all his people are laid on him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him. Partaking of the fruit of the law, he dies, but being in this so far superior to his type, he had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. Adam the first could go no further than to involve himself in the condemnation under which his beguiled and deceived wife had fallen; he could share with her fate, but had no power to redeem or to deliver her.

Fourth. We come now to that part of the subject on which our correspondent desired us to write, as stated in Genesis 3:22, which we propose to consider in connection with the two succeeding verses of the same chapter.

1. We will offer a few thoughts on the import of the declaration of the Lord God in relation to the changed condition of man in consequence of having eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. “And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil.” The figure was now complete. Adam, who, according to the express purpose of his creation, was to be a type, likeness, figure or image of his Maker, of Christ, of him that was to come, of “one of us,” had now attained to the perfection of that imagery, not only as the first Adam, the head and embodiment of his natural posterity, a perfect

figure of the second Adam, who is the head and embodiment of the spiritual seed, in whom also was the life and substance of his bride, but now, in eating of the tree which prefigured the law, Adam, who knew no sin or evil before, is made sin for her. While in a state of innocency what could even Adam know? But now, in receiving at the hand of his wife the fruit of the tree, the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, or of evil, the law being the ministration of death, he came to a knowledge of evil, and thus more perfectly the figure of Him that was to come; the figure of him who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners; of him who knew no sin, yet for the sake of his church became sin, by being made under the law, and by the assumption of all his people, who thus by following his bride in the transgression secured the purpose for which she was given to him, namely to be with him. Thus the man became as one of us in that particular, that is, by his knowledge of good and evil, the type of him who should bear his people's sins in his own body on the tree. We cannot perceive that Adam's knowledge of good and evil made him like his Maker in any other sense than that of being the figure of him that was to come, in actually coming under the curse and penalty of the law, for even of good and evil his knowledge could not approach the infinite knowledge of the supreme God. The "one of us" we understand was and is the man who is the fellow of the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 13:7).

2. Man's expulsion from the garden was a consequence resulting from his connection with the tree of knowledge of good and evil. "And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever." The evil which Adam knew, in consequence of eating of the tree of knowledge, was a pollution of his nature, and the sentence of mortality; death. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This sentence placed Adam and his posterity beyond the reach of the tree of life. Christ's coming under the law and bearing the sins of his people involved the

necessity of his death in the same day, or dispensation, in which he was made of a woman, made under the law. In fulfillment of this figure, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, he suffered without the gate, that is, without the gate of Jerusalem, which figuratively signifies the same as did the garden of Eden. Here, perhaps, the figure ends, for Adam could not redeem himself or his bride. He had no power to raise from the dead or deliver himself, his bride or his posterity from the sentence of the law which consigned him to death. The tree of life in the midst of Eden, which was accessible to man as long as he remained in the garden, to agree with this whole cluster of figures, was natural life. As long as he remained in innocence and abstained from the forbidden fruit of the law, the tree of life secured to him that life which he had, and all the comforts adapted to his condition as an innocent man. He required no other, and indeed was not capacitated for the appreciation of spiritual life; that capacity he could not have without being born again, for the Scripture declares that that Adam which was first was not spiritual, but natural. And again, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit,” etc. And, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Now the sentence of death being upon Adam, and all his race in him, demanded his expulsion from the garden in which was the tree of life. The reader will observe that though the tree of life in the garden represented the natural life which man then possessed, yet it was figurative of the tree of spiritual, immortal or eternal life, which is found only in the midst of the paradise of God.

3. Prohibited now from the tree of life, and condemned to die, we see man totally divested of all power to put forth his hand. He could not take of the tree of life to shield himself from the execution of the sentence which had passed on him, and on all mankind in him. From the hour in which he was driven out of the garden neither he nor any of his race have

had power to perpetuate their natural lives one moment beyond the bounds which God has set. The days of man are as the days of an hireling, so that he cannot pass the bounds.

4. But viewing the tree of life, as figurative of that tree of spiritual life of which our Lord Jesus Christ is the root and offspring, we have one of the most clear and positive presentations of the total inability of man to raise himself from a state of condemnation and death, either by the law or the gospel. Not by the law, for he is condemned already by the law, and the wrath of God abides upon him; nor by the gospel, for he is driven out from the garden in which that tree is planted, and the way to it is kept by cherubim and a flaming sword, which turneth every way, meeting him at every possible point. How utterly hopeless are all the efforts of men to put forth their hand. The cherubim, or spirit of the holy law, watches every movement with untiring vigilance, and the flaming sword meets them at every turn. Nothing that the hand of man can perform, no offering that in their hand the sons of men can bring, can gain for them access to the tree of life. Nothing short of the way of holiness, the new and living way which God has consecrated for his people through the flesh of our Redeemer, can open to any man the gates of salvation. Christ is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man hath seen, or can see, whom no man can approach unto. He is the Way, and the Truth, and Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by him. Nor is there any possible evasion of this truth. He that hath the Son of God hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life. The way of the tree of life is securely kept; no fowl knoweth it, the vulture’s eye hath not seen it, nor hath the lion’s whelp trodden it.

In connection with the foregoing, it may be well to consider the destination of fallen man, as long as he shall remain on

earth. “Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man,” etc. “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field: in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” How changed is the condition of man! Expelled from the garden which God had planted and blessed, where every comfort grew spontaneously that he could possibly need or desire while in a state of innocence, but now having become a sinner, and fallen under the curse of the law which he had violated, the productions of this garden were no longer suited to his condition, and even the outer world or earth into which he was cast was unsuited to his condition until God, for his sake, had pronounced a curse upon it. “Cursed is the ground for thy sake.” Now doomed to encounter the thorns and thistles, and in sweat and labor, in toil and sorrow was he doomed to seek his subsistence from the earth out of which he was taken, until his wearisome days of labor and sorrow should be accomplished, and then his earthly body should sink back into the bosom of the earth still groaning under the curse which for his sake was laid upon it. How strikingly in all this is the present condition of his fallen progeny portrayed! Fallen man doomed, as a righteous judgment of God, to seek and labor and sweat and toil to procure support and happiness from the earth, and forbidden and prohibited from putting forth his hands to take of the tree of life. Is it then surprising that the propensities of man are all drawn to the earth? Not only is he toiling for the support of his earthly body, but also for the comfort of his earthly mind. All his conceptions of a religious nature are also worldly, earthly,

sensual and devilish, and as such they are always work-mongrel, and in his alienation from the tree of life he can conceive of no higher order of religion than that which he can attain to by his works, and works, too, which must perish and finally be consumed, when the earth and all the works thereof shall be burned up.

Lastly. As Eve and all the kindred of the earth are embraced in the earthly Adam, and all die in him, so all the church and seed of Christ are quickened in the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven. In Romans 5:14, we read that after the similitude of Adam's transgression he (Adam) is the figure of him that was to come, that he is in the similitude the figure of Christ, who has now come. "But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence [not offenses, but a single offence] of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded to many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offenses unto justification. For if by one man's offence [or as in the margin, by one offence] death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offence of one [or by one offence] judgment came upon all men to condemnation [that is, upon all the posterity of the one man]; even so by the righteousness of one, [or as rendered in the margin, by one righteousness] the free gift came upon all men [that is, all whom he represented] unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Thus in the transgression of the first Adam, whereby he involved all his natural posterity in sin, guilt, condemnation and death, the inspired apostle could see a similitude of redemption and

justification to life of all the seed of Christ by his righteousness.

We have extended our reply to our correspondent to a great length, but venture to hope that we have not darkened counsel by words without knowledge. We have felt unwilling to give such views as we have on the single verse proposed, believing that we could make ourselves better understood by taking the general range of the whole subject. If our prolixity shall render what we have written dull and uninteresting to some, we hope that some at least may read it with profit and edification.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 162 - 173

GENESIS iii. 22-24.

Bainbridge, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1881.

DEAR BROTHER: – As I have never asked your views upon any portion of scriptures, will you please indulge me this once and give your views on Genesis iii. 22-24, particularly the twenty-second verse, and oblige one that would know nothing save the truth as it is in Jesus. It has been on my mind much, and I have no light on the subject. I hope you are enjoying a happy New Year, and may it be the Lord's will to spare you and to sustain you in building the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

JEROME BUNDY.

REPLY. – We cannot in truth say that we have no views on the subject presented in the text on which our brother desires us to write, but whether the publication of our views will prove edifying to our readers, or be considered speculative and unprofitable, we cannot tell. We do not feel satisfied that we have a right to withhold such views as we have when called upon by brethren to express them. We do not exact or desire any to indorse or receive our views any further than they shall find them sustained by, and in perfect harmony with the inspired scriptures of divine truth. We are deeply sensible of our liability to err, and therefore desire that our readers may closely, calmly, and honestly scrutinize whenever we publish as our views, and always bear in mind that all spiritual instruction must come from him who teaches as never man taught, the text reads thus:

"And the Lord God said, Behold, the man has become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the

garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

"*And the Lord God said*." With sacred reverence and godly fear it becomes us to accept the words which come to us from the mouth of the Lord God, and the utterance of whose voice the heavens and earth, with all created things sprang into being. With profound silence and submission, it becomes us to bid every doubt of its truth depart. All that is contained in the sacred scriptures demands our most prayerful consideration, and it is infidelity to dispute what God has spoken to the fathers by the prophets, or to us in these last days, by his Son. But when any portion of the secret testimony is thus presented, it seems to call for more than ordinary consideration. Were it not a matter of the most vital importance to us, we cannot think we would be reminded that the words proceeded immediately from the mouth of the Lord God. The most sacred names which God has appropriated to himself, are applicable to none but himself. He is the Lord, having unbounded dominion over all things in heaven and earth, holding the destiny of all beings, all events and all worlds in his mighty grasp, and as God, the supreme Offer of our being, a poll durable things, preserve are of our lives, and giver of every perfect gift, possessing in himself all the infinite perfections or attributes of his most holy being, and he is the only object of worship, adoration or unlimited trust and confidence.

With this expressive and doubt-silencing introduction, "And the Lord God said," his words are recorded, "Behold." The Lord God commands those to whom the mandate comes, to behold! To know well, daily consider, wonder, admire, be astonished of the way the import of a wonderful event, in which man is humbled, and expelled from the Eden in which

he dwell, in debarred forever from all human ability to put forth his hand and take and eat of the tree of life. Cherubim and a flaming sword meet all the vain efforts of sinful man at every point. The same unchangeable God whose potent words cold all things into existence, now letters thee are evil above sentence, which drives apostate man from Eden; forbids that he shall have power in himself, by willing or doing, to extend his hand to help himself to the tree of life, or to do anything whereby he can gain admittance to the tree of life, or to its virtue to secure to himself everlasting life. The awful reality of the utter inability of man to secure to himself a blessed state of immortality by anything that he can do, we think is clearly taught in the personal experience of every heaven-born subject of the saving grace of God. When first arrested by divine power and dragged forth, like Adam, from our hiding among the trees of the garden, and stripped of our fig leaf covering in which we had vainly sought to hide Howard nakedness in shame from the searchings eye of God, how persistently did we try to find some way of access to the tree of life, but in every attempt were met by the angel of the divine presence in his holy law, and the flaming sword, repelling in keeping this back, and two we were thoroughly convinced of the wretchedness of our helpless and hopeless condition. The cherubim and flaming sword still keeps the way of the tree of life; man’s hand and arm are still impotent, and nothing short of the almighty arm of God, made bare for our salvation, can meet the flaming sword, or can minister to any of the sons of men the right to the tree of life. And notwithstanding all the boasted power of free agency, free will, and human ability claimed by the infatuated children of men, none but the Savior of the poor lost sinners can unbar the gates of death, and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. But still to a greater wonder opens to our sight, while we obey the voice of God, “Behold.” In deep amazement we inquire, How, or in what sense is the transgression and expulsion of

Adam, like one of the "*us*," in the knowledge of good and evil?

In order to an understanding of this mystery, it is necessary to inquire after the meaning of the plural personal pronoun *us*. We are forbidden to believe there is a plurality of God's. "Here, O Israel. The Lord our God is one Lord." – Deut. vi. 4; Mark xii. 29. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." – 1 Tim. ii. 5. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." – Gal. iii. 20. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." – 1 John v. 7. "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is God." – Isa. xliv. 6. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is God besides me." "For the saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." "And there is God else beside me; a just God and Savior; there is none beside me." "For I am God and there is none else." "I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." – Isa. xiv. 5, 6, 18, 21, 22, and Isa xlvi. 9. The scriptures, we believed, fully establish the often repeated declaration of God himself that there is but one God, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are but the one only living in true God. Yet the plural form of the pronoun US is used in giving us an account of the creation of the heavens and the earth; not to express or implied that there was more than one God, but in the beginning, when God created the heavens and earth and all that in them is, the Word which was with God, and which was God, was, in his Mediatorial Sonship, with God in all that was made for executed, for he is, not only in his eternal Godhead, but also as the Son of God, identified, and identical with the Father, for he is before

all things, and by him all things consist. He is both God and the *begotten Son* of God, full of grace and truth. He is both God, and with God. – John i. 1-2. This "Only begotten Son of God" is the same that in the beginning was with God, and was God, and was, in the fullness of time, sent into the world, made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, "made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death," who was delivered for our offenses and raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and for ever lives to make intercession for his redeemed people. He is God, and the most full in unlimited sense of the word, and as such is declared by the Father, for, "unto this Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." – Psa. xiv. 6-7; Heb. i. 8. But not another God distinct from the Father; four, as we have seen, God himself declares, There is no other God. The Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he in the Father are one. He that hath seen the Son, in his divine fullness hath seen the Father also. Truly hath the inspired apostle written, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, scene of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory." – 1 Tim. iii. 16. It was not one distinct equal third part of God, that was manifested in the flesh, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." – Col. ii. 9. God is not divided. The Father, and the Holy Ghost and all the fullness of eternal perfection dwells in him. As the only begotten Son of God, he is not only one and identical in the Godhead with the Father that he is also one with his body the church. "The head of the church is Christ." Without this head, the church as the body of Christ could not exist, as nobody can live in the absence of its head. "And the head of Christ is God." – 1 Cor. xi.3. So Christ, if it were possible to separate him from his supreme Godhead, would cease to be a Savior, for he has said to the Jews, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the

Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also do with the Son likewise." – John v. 19.

Now, that Christ is the only begotten Son, and Mediatorial head of the church, was in the beginning with God is, as we think, fully proved by the direct testimony of the scriptures. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by all things consist: and he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." – Col. i. 15-19. In perfect consonance with this direct testimony are the words, Heb. i. 1-8, "God, who at sundry times and diverse manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the world's; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which is the angel said he had any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me the Son? And again, when he bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he said, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers of flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Here, let us observe, both the eternal Godhead of Christ, and his Mediatorial subservance to

the will of the Father, are clearly set forth; as God his throne stands forever and ever, while as the Son, he learned obedience to the will of the Father. Now, both as God, and as the Mediatorial head of the body, the church, he is manifestly both the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God. And this, to our mind, explains the use of the words, Let *us* make man. We are informed, Gen. i. 1., that, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and in Heb. i. 2, that God made the world's by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and in John i. 1-3, that all things that was made, or made by him, whose name is called "The Word of God." – Rev. xx. 13. By the Word, which in the beginning was with God, and which was God. In whom was that Life which was and is the true Light of men. Here then, we infer, is the ground on which the plural form of the pronoun *us*is used. God made the world's by his Son, who in the beginning was the embodiment of the Life and Light of all those who were chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world.

Now, to return to the inquiry of Brother Bundy, "Behold the man (the earthy Adam) has become as one of *us*." Not in purity, Infiniti or in glory, for he had sinned, and death had passed upon him and all his undeveloped posterity, but in the one particular named, "to know good and evil." He had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. In this "Adam was the figure of him that was to come," and his following his bride in the transgression, prefigured, foreshadowed and typify the mediatorial work of him by whom and for whom all things were made, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we take to be emblematic of the law which Adam transgressed; that law was holy, just and good, and by it also is the knowledge of sin, or evil. By eating the fruit of the law, in knowledge of the purity of God is given, and also of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. While man

continued in innocence he knew not the terrors of the law, but when the woman was beguiled and deceived and in the transgression, she could not return to the state which Adam was in, and from which she had fallen, and, the woman which God had given to be with him, must've been forever separated from him, and the purpose of God and that gift thwarted, if Adam, who was not deceived, had not followed, and from her hand received the fruit of the tree. Admitting Adam to be the figure of Christ, and eve of the church, which is the body, flesh and bone, of Christ, figuratively speaking, the man in following the woman, taking her transgression on himself, was, if we rightly understand the figure, *like*, or emblematic of the Son of God, the Mediator and Savior of his people, coming under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Cheeses was not deceived, nor was it by accident that he was made sin for us who knew no sin, and became the sin bearing sacrifice, in the redemption of the church, who, after the similitude of Adam, could say as Adam said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." – Gen. iii. 12. Thus, if we write the understand the figure, Adam in receiving the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil at the hand of his wife, completed the similitude, and he became the perfected figure of him that was to come, and so like one of the *us*, named in the text.

Adam could prefigure Christ thus far, in coming under the law and assuming all its penalty, but he to go no further; here the figure inns, for Adam could not redeem, wash, purify or cleanse himself or bride from the guilt and pollution of sin. And now the interdiction is irrevocably announced, "And now, lest he (man) put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and the place to the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a

flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

Here is already set forth the total inability of mankind to put forth their hand to take of the tree of life, or to evade the fearful consequence of sin. Adam is the figure of him that was to come, not only in coming under the law, and in learning its penalty, but in his progenitive headship, as the embodiment of all his earthly posterity, he was figurative of the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, as the life and righteousness of all his spiritual seed which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; but of this we will not now write. Made a God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, and enlighten the eyes of our understanding that we may know what is the whole of his calling and what the riches of the Glory of his inheritance in the saints, and may he preserve us from error, for his name’s sake.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 4.
February 15, 1881

GENESIS 4:10; JUDE 11

"The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground!" - Gen. 4:10.
"Wo unto them, for they have gone in the way of Cain!" - Jude 11.

It is worthy of remark that the first blood that was ever shed by man resulted from a religious controversy, in which the murderer claimed a right of dominion over the conscience and faith of his innocent and unoffending brother - and the first death that ever occurred in the human family was that of righteous Abel, whom Cain slew, because his religion did not suit the creed of the murderer. But since that dark and damning crime was perpetrated, what rivers of blood have crimsoned the earth, and by far the greater portion of that blood has been shed by those who, like Cain, have stained their guilty hands in their wicked cruelties in coercing the consciences of their fellow men. Including the Pharisees and Scribes of eighteen hundred years ago with the murderers of all preceding ages, our Lord pronounced them a generation of vipers, and demanded of them which of the prophets their fathers had not stoned; or otherwise put to death; and charged all the righteous blood shed from the blood of Abel, to that of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar, upon that generation. Shocking as the disclosures of blood had been, before the advent of the Prince of Peace, the crimson tide has deepened and over-flowed its banks in the subsequent ages of the history of the world. The sun grew pale and ceased to illuminate the world for three hours, when guilty hands had nailed to the cross the guiltless, spotless Son of God. The apostles of the crucified Redeemer, and very many of the primitive saints, were also slaughtered by the same mad and blood-thirsty persecutors of the servants of the Most High

God. And all this blood was shed by those who made the loudest professions of piety, and who were by the world accredited as the most religious class of men upon the face of the earth. But all the rivers of blood which that malignant generation had shed - could not satiate their murderous disposition. In scarlet lines of history we trace the carnage, desolating whole nations; and by racks, tortures, gibbits, flames, through the dark ages, which records the martyrdom of slaughtered millions, for their alleged lack of orthodoxy to some humanly dictated religious creed. Nor has the sea of blood ceased to swell its tide since the pagan and papal powers have been measurably restrained by what has been greeted as the radiance of a brighter day. Reformers who have protested against the cruel deeds of their fathers have followed in their track, to the full extent of their power; although restrained by the providence of God, they have become weary of restraints, and in the midst of their boast of progression in civilization, science, and divinity, have never lost their thirst for blood. In the early settlement of our country, the Puritans who professed to have fled from persecution in the old country, but in reality had left the old country because they had lost the power there to persecute others, set themselves up as dictators of the faith of all others, and immediately drew the sword to defend their unholy claim. Baptists, Quakers, and all others who dissented from their religious dogmas, were most cruelly persecuted, some were whipped publicly through the streets, tortured with red hot irons, chopped, mutilated, imprisoned or banished and sold into slavery, while others were put to death. That same puritanic persecuting spirit has not yet died out, but has always been ready and eager to hurl its thunderbolts against all who would not yield to them the keeping of their consciences, and hail them as the authorized exponents of the pleasure of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. Born, as we were, among them in New England, and for three score years, we have been a close observer of

their attempts at usurpation and domination, we have always found them the most eager to persecute all who will not acknowledge their divine right to control the religion of others. Though loud indeed they have been, at times, in their professed love of liberty, we have never known them to omit an opportunity to sap the foundation of all religious liberty - or to accredit to others what they grasp after for themselves. At one moment they call on the secular power to enforce the observance of their holy days, or to inflict pains and penalties on those who refuse to allow them to judge them in their meats or drinks. At another, they seem suddenly alarmed for fear the country will sink to perdition for running the mail on their Sabbath day, anon a well feigned horror seizes them, because the institutions of Jehovah in the relationship of masters and servants is tolerated in some of our States, and indeed when it is not one thing, it is sure to be some other, that they will use to the full extent of their ability to stir up strife, animosity and divisions among us. The strides with which this anti-christian spirit has advanced, since the religious conscience keepers of our country have managed to control our public schools, and by chartered advantages obtained from the government, have plyed their Sunday School, Missionary, and other kindred institutions to a telling effect, so that at the present day their spirit is so widely diffused abroad, that it pervades nearly all the churches of the various religious denominations. The effect of all this is painfully apparent at this moment. Very few pulpits in our country can be found, either in the North or in the South, devoted to the doctrine of peace on earth, and good will towards men. The present fratricidal war which is now threatening to desolate the fairest portion of the earth, is principally attributable to the maddening appeals which have been constantly made from the pulpits both North and South to the most violent passions of the human heart, calling for blood. Judging of the nature of the religion of America today, by the "howling of the shepherds," or clergy, one might well

conclude that Mars, and not that God who is Love, is the accredited deity. While the war cry is thundering from every popular pulpit and nearly every religious press in all the States - and those who profess to be the commissioned ministers of the gospel of peace, are foremost in denouncing as traitors all who will not receive and indorse their howlings for blood, as the genuine doctrine of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, is it strange that the most bitter hatred and revengeful feelings of depraved human nature are engendered on both sides of the dividing line? The Georgia State Convention of the New School Baptists recently presented a preamble and set of Resolutions to the Congress of the Southern Confederacy, urging on the war, and pledging themselves religiously to sustain it. While at the North almost the entire clergy are lashing their laity into a tempest of violence against their Southern brethren. As Old School Baptists, we disclaim all affinity to, or fellowship for, those New School, or Missionary Baptists, both North and South, whose principal efforts are now employed in fanning the flames of war. Our mission is very different. As Old School Baptists, we are loyal to the powers that be, and we have from the days of John the Baptist held the reputation of a peace-loving, law-abiding people, always ready to render to Caesar the things belonging to Caesar, and to our God the things which belong to God. But never have we been known to howl for war, or seek to excite the civil powers to shed blood. How striking is now the contrast between them and those who are in their religious capacity, like hungry tigers, pressing on to deeds of cruelty! The true ambassadors of the Prince of Peace are weeping for the cause of humanity, and pouring their prayers before the throne of heaven, for a divine interposition, to roll back the war cloud, which darkens our country, to hush the ravings of demons who thirst for human gore - and to restore peace and prosperity to our distracted country. But woe unto them who have gone in the way of Cain! Their judgment slumbereth not. The righteous

Judge presides upon the eternal throne of Justice - and midst the din of war, his awful voice proclaims, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay."

Brethren in Christ, wherever located, by whatever circumstances surrounded; let us endeavor to conform in all our walks and conversation strictly to the word and spirit of our God. Deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly, with our God. As much as in us lies, let us live peacibly with all men. Render not evil for evil, nor reviling for reviling. Pray for your enemies as well as for your friends - for all that are in authority over us, that we may lead a peaceable life, in honesty and godliness; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior.

"Bless'd are the men of peaceful life
Who quench the coals of growing strife;
They shall be call'd the heirs of bliss'
The sons of God, the God of peace."

Whatever duties may devolve on us as citizens of this world, to respect and to sustain the governments under which our lots, in the providence of God, are cast, as Christians and churches, or in our religious characters, it does not become us to interfere with the political affairs of States or Nations; much less to use our influence to engender strife and urge for violence. If those who are placed over us in authority find it necessary to resort to the sword, let us lament that such necessity exists - and pray that peace and prosperity may return to every part of our beloved country and to all the world, if it can consist with the pleasure of our all-wise and gracious God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.,
June 15, 1861.

Republished: The Remnant
Volume 4, No. 2 – March – April, 1990

GIDEON'S ARMY THREE COMPANIES - EMPTY PITCHERS - LAMPS, &c

In reply to brother Isaac McCarty, of New London, Iowa, we will give such views as we have upon the figurative import of the text recorded in Judges 7:16, which reads thus: "And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers."

The records of the Old Testament we are informed are given for our instruction, and contain a shadow of good things to come, things in which the saints of the present dispensation have an interest. The people of Israel whom God redeemed from Egypt, and with a strong hand and outstretched arm brought out of the house of bondage and through the sea, and through the wilderness into the promised land, were undisputably typical of the spiritual people which were chosen of God in Christ, and redeemed from the bondage of the law, the pollution and guilt of sin, and brought by his almighty arm into the gospel rest which wu prefigured by the land of promise. The propensity of Israel to murmur, fret and rebel, and when not under the chastising hand of God to go into idolatry, clearly portrays the wandering and rebellious propensity of the spiritual tribes of the Lord to depart from his precepts, wax fat and kick, when left to develop their carnal proclivities, for the trial of their faith. As Israel were often chastised for their rebellion and idolatry by being driven before their enemies until thoroughly made sensible of their own weakness and entire dependence on God for deliverance, so the children of God are frequently reduced to

the greatest extremities, and with deep contrition to call on God to deliver them from their distress.

The connection of our text shows that Israel had done evil in the sight of the Lord, and had been delivered by the Lord into the hands of Midian for seven years; and when they were sorely oppressed by their enemies, the angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon, the son of Jonah, and commanded him to demolish the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove; and this exasperated the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east, and they raised a mighty army, and came down upon the people of Israel with a host that was like the sand for number, and encamped against Israel. Israel, now humbled under the chastening hand of God, in their distress called on God for deliverance; and God, by his angel, appeared again unto Gideon, and promised to deliver Israel by his hand; and having strengthened him for the work, gave him special instruction how to proceed. To all human appearance the whole combined forces of all the tribes of Israel could make but a very feeble and fruitless resistance to such a mighty army; but God had determined, instead of augmenting the army of Israel, to reduce the handful which were with Gideon, from thirty-two thousand men to the number of only three hundred, lest Israel should boast that by their power or valor they had achieved the victory. Truly God is jealous for his own glory, which he will not give to another, nor his praise unto graven images. God's method of strengthening the heart and hands of Gideon, and Gideon's misgivings and fearfulness, are well illustrated in his dealings with his children in every age. We all know something of the doubtings, fearing., trembling and slowness of heart to receive and rely upon the kind and gracious promises of our God. But when he strips us for the race, or harnesses us for the battle, then we can, through him, run through a troop or leap over a wall, and do valiantly.

We may trace this subject far, and compare God's dealings with Gideon and Israel with the experience of all the saints in their numerous conflicts with their enemies and their triumph over them; but there appears to us a still deeper and more striking application of the figurative import of the part of the subject presented in the text proposed for our more especial consideration.

From the allusion to this subject, Isa. 9:4-7, we conclude that Gideon, in leading the little band of God's elect or chosen people to triumph over the Midianitish hosts, was a figure of Christ, as the Captain of our salvation. The removing the yoke and burden and staff and rod of oppression of Israel by Gideon, was attended with confused noise in the Midianitish camp, and garments rolled in blood; not by swords of steel or weapons of carnal slaughter used by Gideon and his men, but by confusion in the enemies' camp, which set every man's sword against his fellow; and this confusion and consternation was occasioned by what was to them the confused noise of three hundred trumpets breaking suddenly upon their astonished ears, and simultaneously with the noise, the fearful glare of light from three hundred lamps, which carried dismay and terror to their quaking hearts. so when our spiritual or anti-typical Gideon, the "child born, the Son given, the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace," should vanquish all the enemies of his cause and people, it shall answer to the figure and be with burning and fuel of fires. When "that wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." - 2 Thess. 2:8.

If we are right in taking Gideon in this figure to represent Christ, then the three hundred chosen men, elected by God himself, may represent the chosen people of God under the three dispensations, including patriarchs and prophets under

the two former dispensations, and the apostles and saints of the gospel dispensation. This divides the Lord's host into three companies, as they are represented by a multitude of corresponding figures. When Jacob, on his journey, came to the land of the people of the east, he saw a well in the field, and lo, 4here were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks. But it was a fountain sealed, a spring shut up, so that they could not be watered until the flocks were gathered, and the stone removed. The stone, or tables of the law, shut up from the flocks the waters of life, until Rachel (the figure of the gospel church) brought up her father's flock, and then the stone was removed and the flocks were watered. Gen. 29. The division of the Lord's chosen people is represented in the three companies, by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; by Noah, Daniel and Job; by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the burning furnace, and the form of the fourth in their midst, whose form was like the Son of God; in the sign of the prophet Jonah, the three days and three nights he was in the whale's belly, and the three days in which Christ said he would build the temple, the three days he was in the heart of the earth; with many other parallel figures, all of which show that the great battle of the Lord, in which the mighty hosts of the worshippers of Baal or other idols shall be vanquished and go to confusion together, and the wicked shall be consumed by the spirit of the mouth of our great Captain, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming, as the Midianites were by the sound of the trumpets blown by the mouth of Gideon, and reiterated by those who were with him, who were "called and chosen and faithful," and whom Gideon commanded to look at him, and do as they saw him do, should agree with this figurative number. "And he put a trumpet in every man's hand." Not in the hand of every man of Midian, or of Amalek, nor even every man of Israel; but every man of the three hundred whom God has chosen for that service. The proclamation of the gospel of the grace of

God is often spoken of in the scriptures as the blowing of the trumpet. Two trumpets of silver, of a whole pieces, where made at God's command by Moses, to be blown for the gathering of the people of Israel, and for the journeying of the camp. A jubilee trumpet was sounded to announce the year of release to the captives of Israel. "And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem." - Isa. 27:13. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." - Matt. 24:31. The trumpets used by the three hundred chosen men of Gideon did not divide nor scatter Gideon's men when sounded by command of and in harmony with the sounding of the trumpet of their illustrious leader; but it scattered and confused their enemies. So the gospel of the son of God, when sounded at his command, and precisely as the chosen trumpeters witness the sounding of it by their glorious leader and commander, will always gather those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; but "if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for the battle?" The gospel is the sharp sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of him who in righteousness doth judge and make war. This is the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and it will surely carry confusion into the camp of the enemies, and ultimately set every man's hand against his fellow, as in the days of Midian. The sword of the Lord, as we have said, is not a carnal weapon made of steel, but it is quick (vital) and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; it is mighty through God, for it divides asunder between joints and marrow, soul and spirit, and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Such a sword, a 'Thus saith the Lord God," is put in the hand of every soldier of the

cross; but it cannot be used with good effect only at the proper time.

The apostles, after receiving the commission, were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Had some of Gideon's men blown the trumpet before Gideon gave the signal, they might have done mischief; but, "Look on me, and do likewise. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." So says our spiritual leader: Look on me, observe my example, do as ye see me do, obey my commandments, and follow in my footsteps.

Observe, the trumpets were furnished and put in every man's hand by Gideon, as were also the empty pitchers and the lamps. Trumpets have a variety of sounds; some are shrill and piercing, some are smooth and soft, others are harsh and grating in their sound; some are to announce an approaching conflict, calling the people to arms, and some are to proclaim a jubilee of release to prisoners and captives; but for every purpose the trumpet must give a certain sound. Should every man furnish his own trumpet, they would not be likely to harmonize in sound. Some of those that were used by Israel were made of rams' horns, others of silver, and all adapted to the purpose for which they were to be used. The trumpets put in the hands of Gideon's three hundred men fitly represented the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which our spiritual Gideon has bestowed on every, one whom he has called and chosen to grapple with the powers of darkness, and stand in defense of the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And let it also be well observed that the trumpets in the hands of Gideon's men were only understood by the men of Gideon; but made a confused, unintellgible noise in the ears of the Midianitish camp. The same trumpets that cheered and strengthened the hands and

hearts of the men of Gideon, carried consternation and death to their enemies. So the same apostolic gifts that are "a savor of life unto life to them that are saved, are a savor of death unto death to them that perish." "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." "The preaching of Christ is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, (as were Gideon's men,) Christ the power of God and the Wisdom of God."

The empty pitchers may represent the servants of God, who in themselves are but dust and ashes, moulded by the potter, and formed into vessels of honor or of dishonor, according to the pleasure of the potter; in themselves empty, and having no power to either cheer Israel or confound the enemy; but he who has formed the vessels to honor has committed to them a sacred treasure, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The lamps, that were concealed from the view of the enemy by the empty pitchers until the pitchers were broken to let the light shine forth, is clearly illustrated by the apostle, 2 Cor. 4:5-7: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure (of light) in earthen vessels, (as Gideon's men had their light in earthen vessels, and for the same purpose, too,) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And as the mighty hosts of Midian, of Amalek and the people of the east were overwhelmed and destroyed when Gideon caused the light to shine out of the darkness of the empty pitchers, even so will the Lord consume anti-christ or that wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy them with the brightness of his coming. - 2 Thess. 2:8. God's chosen ministers, who take forth the precious from the vile,

are "as God's mouth." - Jer. 15:19. Of the Spirit of the Lord, it is said unto the Zion of the Lord, whose light is come, and on whom the glory of the Lord has risen, "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." - Isa. 59:21. The light in Gideon's pitchers, and the Spirit and words of the Lord, which are a light to our way and a lamp to our feet, God has put in the mouth of Zion's seed, as Gideon put the lamps into the empty pitchers, of his men, and made them to be as his mouth, in declaring his words and in putting forth the precious from the vile.

Although we have extended our remarks to a great length, we cannot well forbear to add a few further reflections on the subject, especially in regard to the useful instruction it presents to the soldiers of the cross of Christ. Neither the pitchers, the lamps or the trumpets, or even the men, had any power to subdue the mighty hosts that were encamped against them. The blowing of the trumpets, the breaking of the pitchers, the shining of the lamps, and the crying, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," all would have been ineffectual, had not God himself directed the whole matter. It was at God's appointed time and in his own way that this great army was to be put to flight, pursued and destroyed. How often, when Zion appears to languish, and the enemy is spread out like grasshoppers, filling the whole land, that unbelief suggests, "The Lord has forgotten to be gracious," and scoffers say, "He is slack concerning his promises," and our trembling hearts inquire, "By whom shall Jacob rise, for he is small?" But we forget that the battle is the Lord's; and when we are made to triumph it will always be in such a way as shall constrain us to say, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." See the well-drilled chosen handful of men, receiving from God their

instructions through Gideon; how very important that they receive every word of the instruction, and obey to the very letter. "Look on me," said Gideon. Should they for a moment turn their eyes from Gideon, they would be terrified at the sight of their enemies, and if they looked at their own feeble numbers, or to their lamps in empty earthen vessels, the sight would be appalling; but as the eye of the servant is to his master, they were commanded to look alone to their leader, and away from everything else. So we find it enjoined on all the saints to be "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." "Behold, when I come to the outside of the camp it shall be that as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

To-day hosts of earth and hell are encamped against the little flock of our Immanuel; their number is like the sand for multitude, their implements and munitions of war are cruel and deadly, embracing all that earth and hell can supply, and they defiantly challenge the armies of the living God, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And their mouth is open in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." - Rev. 13. Like "the lily among thorns, and as the apple tree among the trees of the wood," the little flock, unto whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom, the church of God is seen. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written upon their forehead." "And I saw as it were a sea of glass, mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number

of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." - Rev. 14:1, and 15:2, 3.

When Gideon required encouragment to allay his fears and inspire him with courage, God sent him to listen to a dream related by a Midianite, and interpreted by his fellow in the camp. But how simple the dream. The dreamer did not relate that he saw in his dream the bright artillery of heaven displayed, and the bolts of vengeance hurled in a storm of awful wrath, no fearful display of superior numbers, or of terrible death-dealing engines of warfare; but a simple, harmless cake of barley bread, which a hungry soldier might welcome with joy; but in the interpretation it was portentous of evil to their hosts; it tumbled into the camp, and came into a tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that it laid along. But the interpreter saw in the ominous cake the sword of Gideon and Midian's discomfiture. The little flock of Jesus are looked upon by their proud and scornful enemies now with as little dread as they would feel at the sight of a barley cake; but God has said, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The wisdom of men would suppose the army of the Lord should be greatly augmented, so as to be able to vie with the numerous forces of the enemy; but God in his wisdom caused the number, small as it was, to be reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred men, lest they should say, "Mine own hand hath saved me," and thus rob him of the glory of their salvation. So men are now beating up for volunteers to make what they call the Lord's army strong enough to evangelize the heathen and convert the world; but all their volunteer recruits will be dismissed and sent home, like the surplus men of Gideon, before the final triumph shall

be accomplished, and the naked arm of God, uncovered by human aid or instrumentalities, shall be made bare in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. - Isa. 53:10.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
June 1, 1876
Signs of the Times
Republished Volume 150, No. 3 - March 1982

GLORYING IN THEIR SHAME.

"*To the Editor of the Christian Watchman:*

'MY DEAR SIR: - The inclosed letter was received a few days since, with twenty dollars inclosed; It exhibits so-much of the true spirit of the gospel that we should be pleased to have it published in your useful *Watchman.*May others be induced to cherish the same spirit, while they hear the Savior saying to them, "Go thou and do likewise."

A. B. M. Rooms,
"Yours, &c., H. L."
June 11th.

"Princeton, Mass., July 4, 1830.

'DEAR SIR: - I have no house, nor land, nor wherewith to purchase them. I have a wife and two small children looking to me for the comforts of life; have found it necessary to practice rigid economy, in order to get along without involving myself in debt, with my small income; yet in view of the necessity of having funds, in order to execute the commission of our ascended Lord, and my professed belief of the worth of the soul, I have felt it my duty to give more for the present year than I have formerly done; for it seems to me, that if I must neglect either, I had better neglect the body than the soul; therefore I send you twenty dollars, to be expended as the Board may think proper; which is about two-fifths of what I hope to appropriate the current year, to various benevolent objects. Yours, in christian bonds,

M. B."

"Our readers may recollect that a revival of religion has been recently enjoyed in the place where this letter was written.

May the genuineness of all the revivals from which we hear, be evinced by equally precious fruits.” - *Ed. Watchman.*

REMARKS.

Gracious Sovereign of Zion! Is this “the true spirit of the gospel?” By what precept of thy word are men required to thus neglect their families, leave them houseless, helpless, with but a scanty subsistence, to withhold from the wife we have sworn to cherish and protect, and from the babes which heaven has made our special care, to lavish that which is their due, upon a grasping, avaricious, insatiable priesthood, whose delicate fingers must not labor, and whose families fare sumptuously every day?

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
September 1,1839.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 525 – 526

GOD'S CHILDREN STRENGTHENED.

"STRENGTHEN ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." - Isa. xxxv. 3.

It is difficult to conceive of language more sublime, or of metaphors more striking, to set forth the glory and prosperity of the kingdom of Christ, than those made use of in this chapter. It is a precious cluster of sweet things, and one which the christian loves to approach, and in which he rejoices, while he is enabled to pluck and feast upon its heavenly fruit. And we cannot but admire with all our powers of admiration, that perfect fullness, and fitness there is in Christ for his church. The saints of God are in themselves poor, weak, dependent and helpless; but the gospel of the blessed Redeemer presents full supplies for all their necessities. The church in her militant state is surrounded with Satan's intrigues, and opposition powers. None of the powers of earth can fortify her walls, nor strengthen her gates. Her walls are salvation, and her gates praise. Hence she is invulnerable to all the attacks of the enemy. Her prosperity is in her king, and in him alone, and it is to this end that the chapter is dedicated, and its living and refreshing streams will never cease to flow into, and refresh the Zion of God. What was to be made manifest as the church of Christ, was at the time when this prophecy was written, a wilderness and solitary place, reference being had to the Gentile nations, in connection perhaps with the children of God among the Jews. The Lord had made promises concerning this church, and had said that not one of them should fail, and it is added, "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose." But upon the adversaries

thereof sorrow and destruction are poured upon them. The promises referred to were not only in regard to the blessings which God had in reserve for his chosen people, but they embraced also the destruction of his enemies, through which his elect should be delivered from their rage and oppression. And it is in the development of this truth that the weak hands are strengthened, and the feeble knees are confirmed. None but the regenerated children of God can know how weak man is. Nature, in the pride of her towering glory, may boast of beauty, power and strength; the wicked may spread himself like the green bay tree, and flourish in his place; he may say, I have increased in goods, and have need of nothing; but the christian realizes that God hath said, “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches.” “All flesh is as grass, and all the godliness thereof is as the flower of the field,” which passeth away. The church of Christ early learned where her strength is. And God in his wisdom has been pleased to lead his church in that way, that they shall know that by human strength no man can prevail, and that the strength of the christian is made perfect in weakness. If we look no higher than earth for support, we cannot fail to discover that the church, and the children of God, as it relates to their strength, have the most fearful odds against them. It will appear in the light of nature that a worldly religion will swallow up, and exterminate from the earth, the doctrine of the cross of Christ. And how often has it been said by self-sufficient and presumptuous man, that in a few years more that bigoted and uncharitable sect, who will receive nothing as a gospel observance, or as being in any way connected with the church of Christ, that has not positive authority in the New Testament, and cannot fellowship as orderly members of the church those who do, nor those who do not walk by the rule laid down in the New Testament, will become extinct, and exist only among the things that were. And in these very things there is a radiant

evidence that this sect, which is everywhere spoken against, is the true church of Jesus Christ. For nothing but the real church of God could exist year after year, and age after age, and remain in her unsullied glory, surrounded and beset as she is, and ever has been, by so formidable machinations, and so powerful an adversary as the adversary of the cross of Christ has ever manifested himself to be. The power of wealth, the influence of the mighty and noble ones of the earth, the strong arm of human legislation, the power of kings, and the power of empires, have all been marshalled, and have marched forth in an untiring crusade against the remnant, the poor and afflicted people, the little flock, the helpless and dependent ones, who constitute, and are known by the God of heaven, as his church, and the sheep of his pasture. And yet they exist with strong hands, and grow and thrive, and God’s honor still has a place upon the earth. Nature often wonders, and is astonished that the strength of the saints does not fail them, and that they are not destroyed from off the earth. But their strength flows from a living and immortal fountain, and it is treasured up in Christ, proportined, and communicated to them according to their day, as the Lord hath said, As thy days, so shall thy strength be. Take from them the promises of God, the consolations of the gospel of his grace, and the strengthening influences of the Holy Ghost, and they would faint at once. Deprive them, if it were possible, of the presence, protecting power and the covenant mercies of their God, in a word, separate them in their vital union with Christ, their living Head, and the enemy would make them an easy prey. But of this union, the adversary is totally ignorant, and through this ignorance, and stimulated by a vain ambition, and an unparalleled hatred to the doctrine of the cross, he hopes for final success and triumph in his unholy warfare. But in this he is doomed to final disappointment, and everlasting shame and contempt. The final event, as well as passing ones, will demonstrate the truth, that all the power, strength, artifice and malignity of

the enemy, have proved perfectly abortive in destroying the church of God, and in overcoming his saints. And the business of the ministration of the gospel is to present to all the subjects of it the fullness of Christ as Redeemer, Prophet, Priest and King, and the strength and perfection of all the church in him. This will comfort, strengthen and edify them, and redound to the declarative glory of God. To this end the Lord is still, from his lofty throne, commanding his ministers to cry unto his people, and say unto them that their warfare is accomplished, and their iniquity pardoned. And through this the weak hands are strengthened, and the feeble knees are confirmed.

By the term hand, as it occurs in the text, we understand that member of the body which is very necessary in the performance of certain offices for which God has both designed and formed it. It is also an important member of the body, and belongs to, exists, and is nerved, and made active and efficient, only by a vital union to the head. We could do but little in wielding the sword amongst our enemies, without a hand, in which to hold it. And these hands need strength to grasp the sword, and they need exercise to enable us to wield it. But this strengthening and teaching comes from the Lord. And if (advocating as we do) the ministration of the gospel, possesses strengthening and confirming qualities for the saints, we cannot impute those qualities to the preacher, but to Christ alone, the sum and substance of the gospel, and whom the gospel, or the preaching of it, brings forth as the strength and portion of the church, or as the children of God, whom David said taught his hands to war, so that a bow of steel was broken by his arms. Of Joseph it is said, “The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, from thence is the Shepherd the stone of Israel.”

While the temple was being rebuilt, the workmen wrought with one hand, and held a weapon of defense in the other. And in the gospel day, the children of God should never be found without the sword in their hand. And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. We have powerful enemies to contend with, and though they are spiritual foes, and our weapons are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, yet they are compared to the carnal and deadly weapons of the warriors of this world, and in this light, Paul delivered the following exhortation to his brethren at Ephesus, “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. The sword is God’s, and he made and gave the hands that hold and wields it. And with it one soldier shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight; and David like, by his God he can run through a troop, and leap over the wall. By his God he can enter their fortification, and drive them therefrom. The Scriptures of truth, the testimony of Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God, which was made flesh and dwelt among us, will slay, and utterly demolish all the principalities, powers and systems of men and devils, and he will ride triumphantly in the radiance and power of his own glory, the world over. In bringing forward the true character of Christ, and the promises of the gospel, the hands are strengthened, or the christian is encouraged and emboldened to wield the sword. But some very charitable ones, or at least professedly so, say that we must let the sword be in its place, and not use it in these times, but use entreaties. But what has the Almighty God said by David about it? “Let the saints be joyful in glory.” “Let the

high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people, to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written; this honor have all the saints. Praise ye the Lord." Thus we can clearly see, that while men may, and do wrangle with a plain exhibition of the doctrine of Christ, vilify and traduce those who faithfully proclaim it, God owns and honors them for it. This honor have all the saints. Let us then, dear brethren, endure hardness as good soldiers of the cross, knowing that all who live godly in Christ Jesus (they who contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints), shall suffer persecution. The weak hands are not only to be strengthened, but the feeble knees are to be confirmed. The children of God are, in one sense, travelers, and on a journey, and if their knees fail, they are unable to walk. And while their only strength and soundness is in Christ, the gospel, the substance of which is Christ, strengthens and confirms them. The apostle was engaged in exhorting and confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, that we through much tribulation must enter into the kingdom of God. We here learn what is meant by the prophet in confirming feeble knees. Many of the saints are feeble in these things, and fearful under them, and they need confirming or strengthening. And whether the expression be used, knees or souls, we understand the same general principle or truth to be embraced. The saints are not only travelers, but they are wrestlers. But their wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against those institutions, doctrines and commandments, already referred to, and which have no authority in the command of Christ. And if they attempt to wrestle like Jacob in his own strength, like Jacob they will not prevail until it is taken from them, and they learn that so far as human strength is concerned, the lame man takes the prey. The

gospel of Christ presents the only strength the christian has, and that strength is Christ himself.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" The ministration of the gospel feeds, strengthens and confirms the souls of the disciples; cheers and edifies them, and it ever exhibits before them Christ in his almighty fullness, as their all and in all; and while others contend that it is ordained as a means of regenerating sinners, we need it as a cheering and refreshing stream from the great fountain, and it is the river of the water of life which flows into the Zion of God. It saves believers (not unbelievers) from the things already referred to; for it has pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe. The leaves of the tree of life are for the healing of the nations; not for their creation, but for their healing. The fruit of this tree (Christ being the tree) and the fruit, or the ministration of the gospel, which comes from Christ, is for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine. Thus we discover that we need much, and all we do need is in Christ, and the meat shall not be consumed, neither shall the leaf fade.

Middletown, N. Y.
Oct. 1, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 136 - 142

GOSPEL AID.

"A PETITION was presented in the Assembly on the 23d inst., from A. H. Dennis and others of Cayuga County, asking for an appropriation to aid the preaching of the gospel at Sandy Hill, Washington County. This is the first time that we recollect of the legislature of this state being called upon directly for an appropriation to aid the preaching of the gospel, although it is done annually in an indirect way. We suppose that the legislature will have in the first place to ascertain whether it is the gospel or law that is preached at Sandy Hill, before they make an appropriation for that purpose. On this subject we opine there will be a difference of opinion among the members. We would like to know on what page of the bible it is recorded that Christ or his apostles ever called upon the rulers of state to make an appropriation to aid the preaching of the gospel. If it is necessary to raise money for that purpose, it must be done by moral obedience, and not by legal force." – *Goshen Clarion*.

WE are inclined to regard the above application to the legislature by citizens of Cayuga County, to make an appropriation to aid the preaching of the gospel in a sister county, as intended for an experiment to see how far our *pious* legislature will go in mingling church and state affairs by legal enactments. Our state legislature was engaged a considerable portion of the preceding session in the discussion of and legislation upon subjects of a religious character, and generally of a sectarian bearing. Fifty-nine thousand, six hundred dollars were appropriated for religionizing our common schools, by and through the establishment of a *monster* State Normal School, after the most approved Prussian model, and in placing that school under the semi-supervision of grave Doctors of Divinity. Much

time and treasure were expended in long and grave debate by that session, on the subject of revising, improving and enforcing the Mosaic law upon the Gentile sinners of the state of New York.

Now if our legislature has the right and competency to define, revise, amend and enforce the law of God, abolish the right which our Creator has vested in parents to direct in the education of their own children, to settle by legal enactment the long controverted question in regard to a legal Sabbath, we see not why they may not determine what is, and what is not gospel, arid make appropriations of the people's money to sustain the one, and use their legislative authority to suppress the other. As a bold attempt was made last winter, and a bill came well nigh passing, after much debate, to proscribe a certain religious sect called Shakers, and strong efforts were made to deprive the Catholics of their constitutional rights, and to lavish charters and special privileges upon the unobjectionable sects of our state, why not carry out the policy to its legitimate extent and bearing, and determine by legislative dictation what sects shall be tolerated – what doctrine in religion shall be regarded as sound and orthodox, what days we shall worship our Creator, and how, and at what hour in the morning and evening we may pray?

The *Clarion*, in the above extract, remarks that appropriations to aid the preaching of the gospel have been asked for, in an indirect manner, before. Although nothing can be done by any legislature to aid in the preaching of the gospel of the Son of God, either directly or indirectly, further than to protect all classes, sects and descriptions of our citizens in the uninterrupted enjoyment of their civil, social and religious rights, yet it is notoriously true, that thousands of the funds of this. state have been appropriated for chaplains, colleges, theological schools, and in special

privileges to chartered religious institutions, for the indirect aid of the preaching of what is profanely called gospel; and if the memorial from Cayuga will have the effect to open the eyes of the public to this encroachment upon the constitutional rights of the people, we shall rejoice. We have reason to hope that the present legislature of this state is not so fully under the dictation of a clerical power which has formerly lurked behind the throne, as the preceding; but a vigilant watch should be maintained, and every innovation upon the equal and unalienable rights of all classes of citizens should receive an early and effectual rebuke.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
February 1, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 616 – 618

THE GOSPEL COMMISSION.

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." – Matt. xxviii. 19

UPON the work of the gospel ministry our views have been repeatedly given; but more particularly in the Circular Letter of Ketocton Association of 1839, published in Vol. VII., page 130; copied by Warwick Association in 1840, and republished in Vol. VIII., page 108; also adopted by the Chemung Association last June, and again published in their minutes of this year.

We refer brother Fox to that circular, as expressing our views on the subject of preaching the Gospel, as that letter was written by us on the very subject to which this part of his inquiry refers. For the accommodation of such of our readers as cannot lay their hands on that circular, we will briefly say that this passage has become a sort of stereotyped authority with all the new-fangled Arminain tribes of our day for their new inventions. If we demand of them divine authority for infant (religious) schools, Sabbath or theological schools, mission societies, tract peddling, or anything of the kind, we may safely anticipate a reference to the commission, "Go ye," &c. It is stated by a writer in the *Religious Herald*,as a reason why a new translation of the scriptures is needed, that the style, language, &c., of the present English version is so bad that much of the will of God cannot be learned from it. We would suggest, for the consideration of that learned and benevolent writer, to have this passage so rendered as to cover the whole new school ground. It is too akward to read, " *Go ye*," when the thing to be established is, " *Send we*." But if the New School must have a new bible, to suit their improved systems of religious legerdemain, the old bible is

good enough for Old School Baptists. The language of the commission given to the apostles by our Lord Jesus Christ is perfectly plain and intelligible to the household of faith; every word is full of meaning, and set by the Holy Ghost "as apples of gold in pictures of silver." Mark the force, beauty and consistency of every word and syllable. Go. This word was spoken by one who saith unto one, Go, and he goeth; to another, Come, and he cometh. He speaks the word and it stands fast; he commands and it is done. Nothing short of modern scholastic divinity could fail to observe a wide difference between the words *Go* and *Send*. But lest there should appear to be room for caviling, the pronoun *ye* is added. Go ye. Not send somebody else, but *Go ye, i.e.*, ye to whom the order is given by the King of Sion.

It does not require a new translation of the scriptures to satisfy the Old School Baptists that this commission was addressed to the eleven apostles of the Lamb by our Lord Jesus Christ personally, after his resurrection from the dead, and a little while before a cloud received him out of their sight. Although the eleven were illiterate men, fishermen, &c., it does not appear that they had the least difficulty in understanding these words of their Lord, for they went forth, as we are informed by Mark, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, in signs and wonders, &c., and that was precisely where their Lord told them to go. But we will read still further. "Go ye *therefore,"* – wherefore? not because they had all power in earth and heaven, and not because they were on that account duly authorized to transmit the keys of the kingdom, to appoint their successors, or to qualify pious young men to preach, and send them out, by any means. No honest hearted disciple of Christ can possibly so understand this scripture. The term *therefore* refers them to his exclusive right to call and send forth his ministers. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, *go ye therefore*," &c. Go, because I

send you, because I have a right to send whom I please, and I send you; you are duly authorized and commanded to go. Was there anything in these words of our Lord so very intricate as to require a different version? The very fact that all to whom it was addressed did both understand and obey forbids the thought. But where were they to go, and what were they to do? This was all fully understood; they were to go to all nations, and teach them to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded, baptizing such as believed, in the name he had directed to administer that ordinance in.

It would have required the stupidity of modern Gamalielites to have mistaken him to mean that they must go to school and learn to preach; or, being learned, to go lounging about the cities and market places, waiting for a monied call; or go and form mission societies, contract with mission boards, or anything of the kind. *Go teach*. Teach what? That it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that the salvation of the world and the exaltation of Christ depends on the liberality of the people, teach the nations that what Christ had commanded was but an outline of christian duty – a mere blank to be filled up by the ingenuity of priests and people, by inserting, to suit the times, Education, Bible, Mission, Tract, Temperance and Sunday School Societies, or anything else that in their judgment would suit the sate of the times or taste of the people? Not one word of all this. They had nothing more nor less to teach than the observance of *all things that Jesus Christ had commanded them*.

Perhaps our brother Fox will inquire whether we suppose that this commission was restricted to the apostles. Most certainly we do; nor is there one particle of authority in that commission for any but the apostles to whome it was given. But as all the power of both worlds was and still is retained in the hands of Jesus, as the Head over all things to his church,

and as he has instructed his children to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest, we are persuaded that from time to time he has, does and will continue to call whom he pleases, and give them the same imperative order, *Go ye*, or *Go thou*. The commission to the apostles directed them to the field of their labor: "Teach all nations." Not, as formerly, were their labors limited to cities of Judea, or the men of Israel; but they were to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. And in an extraordinary manner were they to preach to all nations, so that their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world. Rom. x. 18. We are not to suppose, because the sound and the words of teh apostle went into all the earth, that every minister of Jesus is required to go to all nations; very few, if any, of them have the liberty, in providence, to go to any other nations than that in which they are raised up. But if any are called of the Lord, in this day, to go into foreign lands to preach the gospel, and will prove that their calling is of God by showing a readiness to obey, relying alone on God to be with them, to sustain and keep them, without leaning upon mission societies, or any human invention, we are ready and willing to divide our last loaf with any such servant of Jesus, and to bid him God speed.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
New Vernon, N. Y.,
August2, 1841

Editorials Volume 1
Pages 700-703

THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

Capeville, VA.
March 23, 1868.

Elder G. Beebe: - Was the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," given exclusively to the apostles, or is it applicable to the ministers of God in these days?

Yours sincerely,
Jesse S. Smith.

Reply: - This command was given to the eleven disciples, as they sat at meat, as stated in the preceeding verse; and the eleven to whom it was immediately addressed were all of them apostles, and the same unto whom our Lord had, on a former occasion, given power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases, etc. But on that former occasion he commanded them to go not into the way of the Gentiles, nor into any city of the Samaritans; but he directed them to go rather unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:1-15). But now their commission is extended to Gentiles and Samaritans, or, without limitation to all the world; their holy vocation, as on the former occasion, was also to be attested by signs following, in healing the sick, casting out devils, etc.

But the question is suggested, If this commission, or command, was given exclusively to the apostles, on what divine authority do the ministers of the gospel now preach and baptize?

When our great Redeemer arose from the dead, and ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men, or to his church, and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and

some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:8-13). The apostles, being filled with the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, were seated in judgment on thrones of unquestionable authority to judge the twelve tribes of Israel; or the gospel church which answers to that figure. They were by the supreme Head of the church invested with authority to instruct the church in all things, whatsoever Christ had commanded them. In this investment of authority was included all the instructions requisite for the recognition of the gifts, which the exalted Savior received for, and gave to his church, and the rule by which the church should discriminate between the gifts bestowed, and assign to each its appropriate place in the church. There is diversity of gifts, but they are all by but one spirit, and God has placed them in the body or church as it hath pleased him.

The apostles have decided that no man taketh this honor (of the gospel ministry) upon him, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron (to the priesthood). In the calling and qualification to the work, God by his Spirit makes such impressions on the mind of his chosen ones for that service, as are to them unmistakable, and at the same time, by the same spirit, it is made known also to the church, that such a gift is among them. As when it was said "Separate unto me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto the Holy Ghost has called them." The instructions for both ministers and church are carefully recorded by the apostles. Their relative duties and privileges are clearly stated. The special instructions to the ministers are found in the charge given by Paul to Timothy, Titus and the elders of the church at Ephesus, and in the concurrent instructions of the other apostles. And although none of the Lord's ministers of our

times can presume to occupy the places and infallible inspiration of the apostles, or to sit with them on thrones of judgment; yet they all have the apostles as examples, and are commanded to follow them, as they followed Christ. They are to continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer, and feed the church of God, over which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers.

Having frequently expressed our understanding of the apostolic commission, in its general bearings, in this article we have endeavored to restrict our remarks to the points on which our views were desired.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7

THE GOSPEL RULE.

“And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” - Gal. vi. 16.

THE Galatian church had experienced a season of disorder and consequently of distress when the faithful apostle wrote to them the epistle from which the above passage is taken; and on examination of the circumstances connected with their disorder, it was found that all their calamity had. come upon them in consequence of a departure from the rule. The true history of this church should be regarded as an admonition to the christian church throughout all subsequent time. Once they stood upon purely apostolic ground, plumb by the rule: once had they known the joy of *running* well - but alas! in consequence of their departure from this rule, they had become so crippled as to be disabled for even *walking* in the King’s highway, until all their backslidings were healed by their Great Physician! Now, being restored to the order of the gospel, they are exhorted to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and not be again entangled with the yoke of bondage. The manner in which this church became disorderly should be a lasting admonition to the saints to beware of the same *rocks and quicksands,* and to abide by the divine *rule.* They were not decoyed by open profligacy, or avowed infidelity, but by those who pretended to more than ordinary sanctity and fear of the Lord; professing, like our modern Pharisees, unbounded love for. souls. By those who, having been prepared of men, not of God, for the work, came among them with enchantments and *bewitched* the church with their *sorceries - not* by recommending less religion than the rule required, but more; for it is much easier to tempt christians to abandon the divine rule, under the pretence of superior holiness to the Lord, or benevolence to man, than in another way. There is

one error which, although presented by the tempter in a thousand forms, always proves more seductive to the saints than any other to which they are frequently subjected - that which involves a system of works in such a way as to be subversive of the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace. With this bewitching bait the judaizing teachers of a law of righteousness as the ground of justification and acceptance with God, came into the churches of Galatia, and urged upon them the necessity of being circumcised, and of keeping the law of Moses, on pain of damnation; for they taught them that unless they were circumcised and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved. From the day on which the churches of Galatia and Antioch were corrupted with this workmongrel heresy, there has existed in christendom a dispute with regard to the *rule* of the christian's life and conversation. Even among Baptists the heresy that the law of Moses continues in full force over the subjects of the kingdom of Christ, and is to be regarded as their standard or rule, is still found; and, what is still worse, we know of a few of these judaizing *rabbies* who are assiduously laboring to impose upon our necks that very yoke of bondage from which Christ our iLord has made us free, and with which we are warned against being again entangled.

It truly seems hard for some, even of our brethren, to understand that the GOSPEL RULE is a sufficient standard for the faith and practice of the saints of God under the gospel dispensation: they seem easily beguiled with the notion that the thunder of Mount Sinai is indispensibly important in securing the heirs of immortality from licentiousness and ruin. But it is not of the law of Moses that our apostle speaks when he says, "And as many as walk according to this *rule,* peace be on them, and mercy," &c., for there is neither peace nor mercy to be expected from the law. As the inflexible law of God could show no mercy even when its vials were poured out upon the person of our Lord, so neither can

peace be upon us as the Israel of God, but by the blood of the cross. Tell me, says the inspired apostle, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye hear the law? But how preposterous the idea that a law that could not give life, nor make the comers thereto perfect, should possess a power to secure in us a conformity to the divine will, of which the gospel is deficient! The apostolic benediction placed at the head of this article is only pronounced by divine authority, on such as walk according to the gospel rule; and our present design is, if possible, to draw the attention of oar readers to this *rule.* What is a *rule?* Is it not a perfect standard - an exact measure? That such is the gospel to the saints, none will dare to deny. Then let it be our constant care to walk according to this sacred rule. It is a rule to walk by; the pathway which it directs, is the path of peace, the way of righteousness and the high way of holiness. Abiding by *this* rule, we are safe - no lion shall be there, no ravenous beset shall go up thereon: the redeemed shall walk there, and it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. Rejecting every other rule, let us square our lives and conversation by this most blessed standard; and then, while even the youths shall faint, and the young men utterly fall, we shall mount up with wings as eagles, shall run and not be weary, and we shall walk and not be faint.

But the apostle says, There are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers; especially they of the circumcision. There are many also at this day unruly, because they walk not according to *this rule:* departing from this unerring rule, their communications are vain and deceptive; and they subvert whole houses, by teaching things which they ought not; things that are not according to *this rule;* such disorderly characters were in Paul’s day, found principally among those which were of the circumcision; and in our day also they are

generally advocates of law righteousness, and depend for salvation on a covenant of works.

NEW VERNON, N. V.,
April 15, 1841.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 683 – 686

THE GREAT DAY OF HIS WRATH.

Cherry Flats, Pa.
Nov. 15, 1870.

BROTHER BEEBE: - A friend has desired me to write, and request your views on Rev.6:17. “For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” I know you have many requests of the kind, and it is impossible for you to comply with them all; but if you will comply with this, you will greatly oblige your unworthy brother, as well as the friend who is so anxious for your views.

As ever, your unworthy brother,
J.W. Elliott.

REPLY. We never feel more sensibly our utter inability to comprehend the deep things of God, than when called to speak or write upon what is contained in that part of the Holy Scriptures called the Apocalypse, or Revelation. We can only write to edification on any portion of the sacred volume, so far as such portion is opened to our understanding by the teaching of that Spirit by whose inspiration the scriptures were written. That Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and although that Spirit is a Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, yet it is the Spirit which our Redeemer says shall be in, and shall dwell with his disciples, and which shall lead them into all the truth. These remarks are, as we think, sustained by the connection of the text on which we are requested now to write.

John saw in the right hand of him who sat upon the throne a book written within and on the back side sealed with seven

seals, and a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? Let heaven and earth be searched, and all that lies beneath the earth. We look, we seek in vain. No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. The holy servant of our God was deeply moved, he wept much, until he was informed that the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

Now mark what joy and ecstasy was felt when the first notes of the immortal song were sounded, when in full chorus many angels round about the throne of our Redeemer, with the four beasts, {or living creatures} and all the elders, the number of which was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, without a jarring note or a discordant sound, sang the new and everlasting song of the redeemed, saying, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” And as their swelling joys arise, the higher, loftier notes ring out, “Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.” Would not our modern prelates, doctors and diviners, who profess to have reduced the mystery of that sealed book to a science, so simple and plain that it may be taught in Theological, Sabbath or Infant Schools, by graceless youths to unregenerate men and children, have charged John with

folly for weeping, and the heavenly throng of the redeemed with madness, for supposing that none but the slain and risen and glorified Lamb of God had power to look upon that mystic volume, or open the seals, or make known on earth what was in it written? How presumptuously vain are the pretensions of men who claim such wisdom and ability, when even the Lamb that was slain, but now risen and exalted far above all heavens, required all the seven spirits or attributes of eternal Deity to perform the work.

But to proceed: The text on which we are called to write is the record of a fearful declaration, and more thrilling interrogative uttered in connection with the disclosures made by the opening of the sixth seal.

Great and marvelous things are disclosed by the opening of each of the seven seals. To apply them with any degree of accuracy and certainty to the periods and events in the history of the church of God to which they severally refer, we dare not attempt; but we will submit for the consideration of our brethren a few thoughts, as we may be led. As the opening of the seals in their order disclosed only the events which have and shall transpire subsequently to the organization of the church of Christ under the gospel dispensation, and as they were opened by him who is represented as a Lamb that had, at the opening of the seals, been slain, they seem to us to relate only to the conflicts and victories of Christ and his church in collision with the powers of darkness, the fearful struggles, and ultimate triumph of the church, “through the blood of the Lamb, and the word of their testimony,” and the final overthrow and inevitable perdition of the enemies of God and truth; and this development extending from the beginning of the gospel dispensation to the end of the warfare.

When the Lamb opened the first seal, John heard, as it were, the voice of thunder, and being summoned by one of the four beasts, {or living creatures, Ezek. 1:5-14} saw a white horse, and he that sat on him had a bow, and a crown was given unto him, and he went forth conquering and to conquer. In the figurative language of this vision, a horse under the control and government of his rider, denotes a kingdom; this white horse may represent the kingdom of Christ in her primitive purity, and under the exclusive government of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose ability to subdue all things unto himself is signified by his bow, and his accession to the throne of his redeemed church is indicated by the crown that was given unto him. Who thus having bent Judah for him, filled his bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made the flock the house of Judah, as his goodly horse in battle. See Zech. 9:12-17, and 10:3. Thus mounted and equipped, he went forth, conquering and to conquer; and "in righteousness he doth judge and make war." Unto him it is said, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O Most Mighty, with thy glory and thy majesty. And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre," &c. Psa.45:3-6. By the spirit of prophecy John was permitted to see and to announce the glorious consummation of the conflict, and final triumph of the Lamb, and describe our conquering King, emerging from the sanguinary field, on the same white horse, with many crowns upon his head, and the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth forth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his

vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. Rev. 19:11-16.

"And when he had opened the second seal," "there went out another horse that was red." Agreeing with the color of the dragon, and of the scarlet colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, on which sat the woman which was arrayed in scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations, &c. Chap. 12:3, and 17:3,4. Whether these descriptive figures were designed to represent pagan or papal anti-christ, or both, it is evident that the red horse and its rider is illustrative of the kingdom of Satan, arrayed in formidable opposition to the reigning power and glory of the great Captain of our salvation. This kingdom and king, red with the blood of slaughtered millions, has had power given him to take peace from the earth, and in its dragon form, as in that of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and the beast that arose out of the earth with two horns, and in the image of the beast, representing, if we mistake not, the pagan, papal, and protestant anti-christs in their order, and finally those numerous humanly devised religious institutions, such as Mission, Tract, and other worldly societies, Sabbath and Theological Schools, with all the other materials of which the image is composed, and in all its multiform development has not failed to employ all the limited power allowed to fill up the allotted cup of iniquities, and fill the world with turmoil, strife and violence.

The opening of the third seal presents a black horse, denoting extreme famine. The opening of the fourth seal disclosed a pale horse, and the name of him that sat upon the pale horse was Death, and hell followed, and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. This description probably refers to the almost

indescribable horrors of what are known as the “dark ages,” or time of the Spanish Inquisition, in the progress of which all the forms of cruelty that wicked men and devils could invent were practiced upon those who were suspected or accused of opposition to any of their abominations.

The opening of the fifth seal discloses the call for a righteous retribution on the murderers of martyred saints who had thus far been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. “And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” This we should remember is figurative language. We are not to suppose the slaughtered saints are unhappy, or that the Spirit of Christ in which they have gone to glory is restless or vindictive, for they have rather prayed that the sin of their murders be not laid to their charge. But it is to be understood in the sense in which it was said to Cain, “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” Gen. 4:10. It signifies their guilt, and the just retribution which was held in reserve for them by the inexorable justice of that God who has said, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay.” That justice will not delay beyond the appointed time, when the allotted cup of abomination shall be full. As it was with Jerusalem, her overthrow was delayed until her crowning wickedness was consummated in the rejection and crucifixion of the Son of God; then all the righteous blood shed from the days of Abel, was visited on that murderous and adulterous generation. And as the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, and of Jerusalem, so in regard to the man of sin, the son of perdition, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and whose damnation slumbereth not, vengeance only awaits the consummation of their crimes.

We come now to the opening of the sixth seal. And if we are right in supposing the sealed book contained all the history of

the church and kingdom of Christ, from the commencement of her conflicts down to the end of the world, we must conclude that the things disclosed by the opening of the sixth seal have special application to the period in which we now live. Commentators, as far as we have read them, agree that the earthquake and darkening of the sun and moon, relate to revolutions in the civil governments of the earth, and the gathering clouds of war with its demoralizing effects. Whether right or wrong in their interpretation, it is certain that the nations of the earth are at the present time shocked with unusual commotion, and the foundations of all civil governments are being violently shaken as by powerful volcanic eruption, and the brightest stars in the political constellation have sadly fallen, and the most ignorant and degraded, many of whom have but just emerged from vassalage and slavery, are entrusted with power, and a blackness like sackcloth of hair darkens the secular atmosphere of the nations of the world.

But we are inclined to seek for an application of these striking figures in the ecclesiastical, rather than in the political elements around us. The termination of the forty and two months, allowed to the papal beast to hold a temporal dominion over the nations of the earth, and to tread under foot the holy city, and the thousand two hundred and three score days, in which the Lord’s two witnesses should prophesy, clothed in sackcloth, having began at the same period, must be consummated simultaneously, and at the expiration of the time indicated, these two witnesses should be slain, and their dead bodies should lie unburied in the streets of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt; and after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God shall enter them, and they shall stand upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them that saw them. Certainly the despoiling of the Pope of his temporal power, at the present time very clearly indicates the fulfillment of the forty-two

months, or the thousand two hundred and three score days; and at the end of these times and events, we are told, "And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." Rev. 11:3,4 & 1-13. A careful comparing of these prophesies with the record of the sixth seal, seems to us to indicate the present, as the time of the sixth seal. The darkness which is clearly observable in the camp of those who once stood on the old apostolic platform, as Baptist churches, and Baptist ministers, is truly as the blackness of sackcloth, and like the plague of darkness which fell on Egypt, it may be felt; while now, as then, in all the dwellings of the spiritual Hebrews there is light. While many of the ministry who once shone as stars have fallen unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. The mighty winds of doctrine which have swept over the world have shaken them from the true church of Christ, and now they are compared to clouds without water, driven by the tempest, to whom is reserved the mists of darkness forever and ever. "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together." The very firmament is agitated and moved, and for a time obscured from sight, as the records of a scroll are concealed from view when rolled together. And in the general consternation, the mountains and islands are moved. Earthly governments are agitated; "and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

It is, we believe, generally supposed that the time is far off in the distant future when these predictions shall be fulfilled,

and we are also satisfied that there is a time, perhaps not so far distant, when the terrible judgments of our God shall be signally displayed against the enemies of truth and righteousness, when Babylon shall sink like a millstone, and be found no more at all; and when the wicked shall be turned into hell with all the nations that forget God. But still we believe that at the present time these things are being disclosed by the opening of the sixth seal of the mystical book. During the gospel dispensation these prophecies must all be fulfilled. It was of the present dispensation it was written, "For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Mal. 4:1. "And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come." Joel. 2:30,31. This prediction is applied by Peter as subsequent to the Day of Pentecost, having a primary application to the destruction of Jerusalem, and finally to the destruction of the man of sin, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, &c. II Thes. 2:8,9.

That the gospel dispensation is the day of the wrath of the Lamb, appears from the following, among many other portions of the scriptures. "The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God," &c. Isa. 61:1,2. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious

in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine fat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth." Isa. 63:1-6. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psa. 2:8, 9, compared with Rev. 2:27, and 12:5. Besides this array of scripture, the opening of the first seal of this book shows the Captain of our salvation seated upon the white horse, with his bow and crown, going forth conquering and to conquer, and in chapter 19:11, it is written, that he is "called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

This great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand? Negatively we are told who shall not be able to stand. The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, {or generals} and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man. All these retreat in dismay before him; they cannot endure his doctrine, his ordinances, nor his government. They desire not a knowledge of his ways. He sits in the throne of his glory, and all nations are before him. He has power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him, and he divideth the nations as a shepherd divideth his sheep from

the goats. And he says unto his sheep on his right hand, Come, ye blessed; and to the goats on his left hand, Depart, ye cursed. Retreating in terror before the majesty of his truth, they seek to hide themselves, in the dens and rocks of the mountains. Dens of the earth, holes in the ground, and the wild cliffs in the mountains, are fit emblems of the hiding of the ungodly. Their dens, which they profanely call churches, are sought by them as places of refuge, and the rocks of the mountains as hiding places, are resorted to evade the truth which indicates his presence which they dread. All the doctrines and religious institutions of men are but holes in the ground, or earthly retreats in which they vainly try to hide themselves. They imagine themselves safe in their hiding places, and vantingly boast that they have made their peace with God, that they made a covenant with death, and with hell are at agreement; when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto them; for they have made lies their refuge, and under falsehood have we hid themselves. But their bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it. Isa. 28:15 & 20. All the men *of the earth*, those whose religion is of the earth, and who dwell, religiously, on the earth, including kings, captains, bond and free men, all whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb, shall worship the beast, and shall perish with the beast. They shall pray to the mountains and rocks in vain; for all things are naked and open to the eye of him with whom we have to do.

But the day of his wrath is not to be understood as when applied to men. God is not subject to excitement, or varying passions; for he is immutable, of one mind, and none can turn him. His wrath is displayed in his own way. “What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.” Rom. 9:22. Men usually show their wrath by

impatient haste for retribution; but God shows his by much long suffering. The long suffering of God once waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. I Pet. 3:20. He suffered long with the manners of the carnal Israelites in the wilderness, and his wrath is shown in suffering his enemies now to go on with their abominations, until the cup of their iniquities shall be filled up. They are no less the subjects of his wrath when in seeming prosperity their eyes stand out with fatness and they have more than heart can wish, than they will be when they shall suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. Nor are the saints any less the objects and recipients of the saving love of God when in deep affliction, and when the waters of a full cup are wrung out to them, than when they shall awake with the his likeness in immortal glory. "Behold," says the psalmist, "these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches." "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction." Psa. 73:12-18.

In this view of the subject, truly we may say, The great day of his wrath is come; for when has the wicked prospered to a greater extent in their wickedness? When have they been held under less restraint? Perhaps no severer judgment can fall on saint or sinners in this world than to be left of God to pursue without restraint their own ways.

"And who shall be able to stand?" "But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." Mal. 3:2. "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands

from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil. He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isa. 33:14-16. None but the redeemed of the Lord shall be able to stand the fiery ordeal; to them alone is the promise given that the fire shall not kindle upon them, nor the flames consume. God has promised to bring them through the fire, and to try them as gold, and to refine them as silver; and when they are tried they shall come forth as gold. "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." Heb. 12:28,29.

Middletown, N.Y.
December 1, 1870.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

GREAT SWELLING WORDS OF VANITY.

ONE of the missionaries acting under a commission given him by the authority of the President, Directors & Co. of the A. B. H. Mission Society, writes thus:

"I have selected Fayette, together with some of the adjoining counties of Tennessee, as the field of my future labors. Should heaven prosper my efforts, I hope to be the means of raising and promoting the Baptist cause in this region; and churches raised in this intelligent and wealthy section of the country will be a great accession to *our cause.*"

These are indeed great calculations. M. J. G. Hall has selected the field of his labors — God's ministers are to feed the flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed them. But these are to select the field of their labors. But why select this favorite spot? Is it in order that the poor, in whose name thousands of dollars have recently been collected by his employers, may have the gospel preached to them; and that the ignorant, (according to the statements of the missionary agents, who are scouring our land in search of gold,) for lack of vision, may be instructed? Quite the reverse. Mr. Hall has something of greater importance to the interest of *our* cause, in his eye. "The people in this section of Tennessee (he says,) are *wealthy* and intelligent." If, then, the people of that country are wealthy, why must the poor of this land be taxed with the support of their missionaries? If they are so remarkable for their intelligence, whence these numerous fables concerning the situation of the great valley of the Mississippi? But why should a wealthy and intelligent people be the best among whom to raise *our cause?* Why are they the choice of the modern missionary? Is it because our Lord has chosen "the poor of this world, rich in faith," &c., and the

illiterate, yea., and base things of this world, or because he has said by his apostle, “Not many noble, not many mighty, &c., are called?” Is it for the express purpose of showing that they consider their wisdom superior to that displayed in the choice and calling of the poor? We think not. The grand secret appears to be this: from a wealthy people a greater revenue may be expected; and that which they so emphatically call *our cau8e,* depends much on revenue; besides, these appear to be the shepherds spoken of by the prophet Ezekiel, xxxiv: “Wo be to the shepherds that do feed themselves. Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat and ye clothe ye with the wool, &c. Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? And to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet.”

The publishing committee of that society says: “The letters of Rev. J. G. Hall presents interesting information respecting the state of things in Tennessee. The committee have appointed him their (not the Lord’s,) missionary, to be located in Fayette and its vicinity. It is probable that another will soon be appointed (by the board, of course, not by the Lord,) for the middle district; but there should be *forthwith* a good man for East Tennessee. Where is he? And still more important question, Where are the FUNDS to sustain them? It is proposed to the friends of Home Missions, *whether the committee shall cease making additional appointments.* This they must do, though frequently called on to send missionaries into regions as greatly needing help, and as promising as Tennessee, unless pecuniary aid is afforded.”

How plain the above language. A good man is wanted, - but stop, that is not the most important; “A still more important question is, where are the FUNDS?” &c. Let the people contribute the *funds,* and the society will find the *good*

men, who will take the charge of this business, of a ready mind, but for filthy lucre’s sake.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
August 14, 1833.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 83 - 85

GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"AND grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." - Eph. iv. 30.

WE have been requested by a friend in Chester Co., Pa., to give our views on the above text, through the "Signs of the Times." The popular sentiment of Arminians and work-mongers in general seems to be that the children of men, even in their fallen condition, have power to inflict upon the eternal and unchanging God, the Holy Ghost, disappointment, sorrow and grief; they have therefore supposed that the above text was designed as an exhortation to unregenerate sinners to beware of their liability to *grieve* the Holy Spirit of God, by obstinately refusing to be quickened by his divine operation. They hold that God, the Holy Ghost, operates to some extent on all hearts, and strives with all sinners to regenerate them; but some sinners are so hardened or careless that the Spirit becomes grieved with them, and gives them over to hardness of heart and a reprobate mind, &c. If by any fair construction of the admonition of the text under consideration, we could arrive at any such conclusion, we would be compelled to yield the ground we occupy in regard to salvation being of the Lord alone, and in this surrender yield also the doctrine of the immutability of God, and of the depravity and consequent inability of men. The absurdity, however, of such notions will sufficiently appear, at least to such as are divinely enlightened, when we present the true meaning of the subject.

In the discussion of this subject, we take the position that neither the above text or any other part or portion of the epistle was addressed to unregenerate sinners. The whole epistle, by authority of the Holy Ghost, was addressed to the

saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus; such as were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestined to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Eph. i. 1-5. Such as were quickened by the Holy Spirit, from a state of death in trespasses and sins; raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with Christ, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. ii. 1-6. Paul having fully identified the subjects of address, as the blessed, chosen, predestinated, redeemed, called and quickened people of God, organized into a gospel church, as one body, in one hope of their calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all; beseeches them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Had their calling, like many professors in modern days, been of men, then to walk according thereto would require them to follow the traditions, doctrines and inventions of men; but their vocation or calling was of God, and that according as he had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world; saved and called, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in him before the world began, (2 Tim. i. 9;) therefore to walk worthy of such a heavenly calling would require that as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord they should walk in him. Suffer us here to remark, when men exhort unregenerate sinners, they have to present selfish motives, such as their eternal destiny at stake. The terrors of damnation on one hand, and the prospect of eternal happiness on the other, or their exhortations avail nothing; but to the living children of God the apostle could present no more powerful incentive than the nature of their vocation; the eternity of God’s love toward them in Christ Jesus, their election, safety and identity with Jesus Christ as the Head over all things to his church, which

is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Eph. i. 23.

If by *the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed,* &c., we are to understand God himself as a Spirit, infinite, eternal, independent and immutable, or the Holy Ghost as God, we would be compelled to consider him susceptible of grief, sorrow, disappointment, &c., which things are quite incompatible with what we have been taught of God; but our Lord told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. So in this text, *the Holy Spirit of God* appears to mean the *spirit of the renewed mind,* otherwise called the "New man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." - verse 23, 24. This Spirit of God, whereby the saints are sealed, is called *the spirit of promise,* and is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. Chap. i. 13, 14.

This spirit then we understand to be the spirit of life; the incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever; the seed that remaineth; the spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, and which dwells in all that are born of God. It is here called the spirit because it is born of the Holy Ghost; it is called the *Holy Spirit,* for that which emanates only from the Holy Ghost must necessarily be holy; it is called the holy spirit of God because it is of God. That spiritual life which was given to the saints in Christ before the world began is called, when received by us experimentally in the new birth, "Christ in you the hope of glory," for in him, the eternal word, was life, and that life is the light of men. When we receive it we receive Christ; for Christ is our life. "He is the Resurrection, and the Life; and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." That life which was given us in Adam, and which the apostle here distinguishes from the spiritual by the

appellation, “the old man,” which is corrupt and carnal, standing connected with law, sin, condemnation and wrath; but this holy spirit or new man is spiritual, incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away; for it was and is reserved in heaven for you who by him do believe in God; an earnest of it is given us when quickened, or after that we believe. As the first operation of the Holy Ghost on our hearts brings us to believe, or in other words, convinces us of sin; of the spirituality of the law; of the impossibility of salvation by works of righteousness that we can do; so after this is effected by the exceeding greatness of his mighty power that brought again our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the struggle the labor, the travail of regeneration gives place to deliverance of the new man, which, not after Adam is created a natural, carnal or corruptible man, of the earth earthy; but is created after God (Christ) in righteousness (Christ) and true holiness (Christ.) By this renewing of the Holy Ghost a spiritual life is communicated to the child of God, which is the spirit of promise (in distinction from law) and whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter i. 4. This spirit in our hearts exerts a transforming influence, by it the saints are sealed. This metaphor teaches two things; first, as the seal makes its full impression on the wax, and which cannot be counterfeited, so the indwelling life born from above makes an inimitable impression upon believers, conforming them to the image of Christ; and secondly, as the seal makes the instrument, covenant, will, testament or promise valid, so this incorruptible seed implanted in the saints is an earnest of their divine inheritance in glory.

This seal of God, instamped on his children, is to serve as an earnest or assurance to the saints, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory; or as

in our text, *until the day of redemption.* That is, as long as the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God.

The day of redemption in this text means the same as in the first chapter and 14th verse, viz: the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. The possession which Christ purchased with his blood is the flock or church of God. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." The purchase of this possession was a redemption purchase; not effected with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, &c. The day of their redemption, in this case, means their final deliverance from corruption, depravity and death; but our apostle says, even we ourselves, who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. Rom. viii. 23. Until, therefore, these mortal bodies of the purchased flock of Christ are arrayed in spotless immortality, until these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying be fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up of victory," and the saints prepared to sing the triumphant anthem, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory" this holy spirit, as the signet of our God, shall be to us an earnest, evidence and assurance that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, and fall, we have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Until that illustrious day shall dawn on us we shall need this earnest, but no longer; for

"When from the dust of earth we rise,
To take our mansion in the skies,"

we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Until then may it be our inexpressible happiness, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to stand upon Mount Sion with the hundred and forty and four thousand, and the

innumerable multitude redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue; having the seal of our Father God deeply impressed upon us in heart, in life, and in practice.

But the solemn admonition of our subject demands our special attention. “Grieve not the holy spirit.” While the eternal God is infinitely above being moved by any such passions as grief, sorrow or disappointment, being of *one mind, and none can turn him,* that spirit begotten in his saints, which is an emanation from him, can be grieved. In Noah it strove with a world lying in wickedness, and devoted to awful destruction. In Lot, his righteous soul was vexed with the ungodly deeds of those among whom he dwelt in Sodom. This holy spirit, as it has existed in all the holy prophets since the world began, has been resisted by the generation of vipers, who do always resist the Holy Ghost; they fight against God, resist God, &c., but they cannot grieve nor change the immutable God, for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and God will hold them in derision; but the spirit begotten of God in his people can be grieved, burdened and sorrowful. For example, witness the case of our blessed Lord in incarnation; he rejoiced in spirit, he groaned in spirit, &c. In all the saints also may be found the same *spirit of God* which was in Christ;, and that susceptibility to sorrow and grief implied in our subject. From the world the saints expect persecution, and in the world tribulation; it does not grieve them when they realize such opposition from that quarter; but they rejoice and give thanks to God that they are accounted worthy thus to suffer for the sake of Christ. The exhortation in our subject is not therefore to the men of the world; let them rage and waste the fury of their spite; but the spirit of God in the hearts of all his saints is grieved when they witness the departure of their brethren from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; they are deeply afflicted when they see any in whom they have had confidence as christians giving heed to seducing

spirits, and doctrines of devils; or when any who profess to know and love the truth depart from a gospel walk and correct deportment. Christians too frequently inflict deep wounds upon the hearts of their brethren by an unbecoming course in life and deportment. Indeed, examples have not been lacking within the last twenty years in the church of Christ. An awful disregard of the admonition before us has marked the course of very many who have now gone out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. Christians are often grieved in spirit with the corruptions of their own natures, indwelling sin; and perhaps this is the most prolific source of all their grief.

To avoid grieving the holy spirit of God, in the sense of this admonition, requires that all the saints should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. That we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That we walk no more as other Gentiles walk - in the vanity of their mind. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths. By indulging in any of those things discountenanced by the apostle, or by neglecting anything enjoined, will necessarily grieve the holy spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption.

O that the Lord may enforce this important admonition on all his dear children! We feel our need of its special application

to our heart, and we would, in the language of the apostle, beseech our brethren to attend to these things. Let all our arrows be hurled at Babylon, and our artillery thunder against the hidden things of dishonesty; let us fight the good fight, and never, under pretension of divine influence, cease to contend against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places; but while valiant for the truth, and ever hostile to the spirit of compromise with Zion's foes, let brotherly love continue among all those whose calling is by a vocation from God, to one hope of our calling. And as the apostle closed this chapter, so close we this article in his words; (not that we pretend to write by inspiration as be wrote, but because we wish to be guided and directed by apostolic precept and example;) "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
June 1, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 619 – 626

GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"AND grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." - Eph. iv. 30.

WE have been requested by a friend in Chester Co., Pa., to give our views on the above text, through the "Signs of the Times." The popular sentiment of Arminians and work-mongers in general seems to be that the children of men, even in their fallen condition, have power to inflict upon the eternal and unchanging God, the Holy Ghost, disappointment, sorrow and grief; they have therefore supposed that the above text was designed as an exhortation to unregenerate sinners to beware of their liability to *grieve* the Holy Spirit of God, by obstinately refusing to be quickened by his divine operation. They hold that God, the Holy Ghost, operates to some extent on all hearts, and strives with all sinners to regenerate them; but some sinners are so hardened or careless that the Spirit becomes grieved with them, and gives them over to hardness of heart and a reprobate mind, &c. If by any fair construction of the admonition of the text under consideration, we could arrive at any such conclusion, we would be compelled to yield the ground we occupy in regard to salvation being of the Lord alone, and in this surrender yield also the doctrine of the immutability of God, and of the depravity and consequent inability of men. The absurdity, however, of such notions will sufficiently appear, at least to such as are divinely enlightened, when we present the true meaning of the subject.

In the discussion of this subject, we take the position that neither the above text or any other part or portion of the epistle was addressed to unregenerate sinners. The whole epistle, by authority of the Holy Ghost, was addressed to the

saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus; such as were blessed with all spiritual blessings, according as they were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestined to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Eph. i. 1-5. Such as were quickened by the Holy Spirit, from a state of death in trespasses and sins; raised up together with Christ, and made to sit together with Christ, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Eph. ii. 1-6. Paul having fully identified the subjects of address, as the blessed, chosen, predestinated, redeemed, called and quickened people of God, organized into a gospel church, as one body, in one hope of their calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in them all; beseeches them to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Had their calling, like many professors in modern days, been of men, then to walk according thereto would require them to follow the traditions, doctrines and inventions of men; but their vocation or calling was of God, and that according as he had chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world; saved and called, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in him before the world began, (2 Tim. i. 9;) therefore to walk worthy of such a heavenly calling would require that as they had received Christ Jesus the Lord they should walk in him. Suffer us here to remark, when men exhort unregenerate sinners, they have to present selfish motives, such as their eternal destiny at stake. The terrors of damnation on one hand, and the prospect of eternal happiness on the other, or their exhortations avail nothing; but to the living children of God the apostle could present no more powerful incentive than the nature of their vocation; the eternity of God’s love toward them in Christ Jesus, their election, safety and identity with Jesus Christ as the Head over all things to his church, which

is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Eph. i. 23.

If by *the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed,* &c., we are to understand God himself as a Spirit, infinite, eternal, independent and immutable, or the Holy Ghost as God, we would be compelled to consider him susceptible of grief, sorrow, disappointment, &c., which things are quite incompatible with what we have been taught of God; but our Lord told Nicodemus, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit," as that which is born of the flesh is flesh. So in this text, *the Holy Spirit of God* appears to mean the *spirit of the renewed mind,* otherwise called the "New man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." - verse 23, 24. This Spirit of God, whereby the saints are sealed, is called *the spirit of promise,* and is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. Chap. i. 13, 14.

This spirit then we understand to be the spirit of life; the incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord that liveth and abideth forever; the seed that remaineth; the spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, and which dwells in all that are born of God. It is here called the spirit because it is born of the Holy Ghost; it is called the *Holy Spirit,* for that which emanates only from the Holy Ghost must necessarily be holy; it is called the holy spirit of God because it is of God. That spiritual life which was given to the saints in Christ before the world began is called, when received by us experimentally in the new birth, "Christ in you the hope of glory," for in him, the eternal word, was life, and that life is the light of men. When we receive it we receive Christ; for Christ is our life. "He is the Resurrection, and the Life; and when he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." That life which was given us in Adam, and which the apostle here distinguishes from the spiritual by the

appellation, “the old man,” which is corrupt and carnal, standing connected with law, sin, condemnation and wrath; but this holy spirit or new man is spiritual, incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away; for it was and is reserved in heaven for you who by him do believe in God; an earnest of it is given us when quickened, or after that we believe. As the first operation of the Holy Ghost on our hearts brings us to believe, or in other words, convinces us of sin; of the spirituality of the law; of the impossibility of salvation by works of righteousness that we can do; so after this is effected by the exceeding greatness of his mighty power that brought again our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, the struggle the labor, the travail of regeneration gives place to deliverance of the new man, which, not after Adam is created a natural, carnal or corruptible man, of the earth earthy; but is created after God (Christ) in righteousness (Christ) and true holiness (Christ.) By this renewing of the Holy Ghost a spiritual life is communicated to the child of God, which is the spirit of promise (in distinction from law) and whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be made partakers of the divine nature. 2 Peter i. 4. This spirit in our hearts exerts a transforming influence, by it the saints are sealed. This metaphor teaches two things; first, as the seal makes its full impression on the wax, and which cannot be counterfeited, so the indwelling life born from above makes an inimitable impression upon believers, conforming them to the image of Christ; and secondly, as the seal makes the instrument, covenant, will, testament or promise valid, so this incorruptible seed implanted in the saints is an earnest of their divine inheritance in glory.

This seal of God, instamped on his children, is to serve as an earnest or assurance to the saints, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory; or as

in our text, *until the day of redemption.* That is, as long as the saints are to live by faith upon the Son of God.

The day of redemption in this text means the same as in the first chapter and 14th verse, viz: the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory. The possession which Christ purchased with his blood is the flock or church of God. "The Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." The purchase of this possession was a redemption purchase; not effected with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, &c. The day of their redemption, in this case, means their final deliverance from corruption, depravity and death; but our apostle says, even we ourselves, who have received the first fruits of the Spirit, do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body. Rom. viii. 23. Until, therefore, these mortal bodies of the purchased flock of Christ are arrayed in spotless immortality, until these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying be fulfilled, "Death is swallowed up of victory," and the saints prepared to sing the triumphant anthem, "O death! where is thy sting? O grave! where is thy victory" this holy spirit, as the signet of our God, shall be to us an earnest, evidence and assurance that when this earthly house shall be dissolved, and fall, we have a building of God; a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Until that illustrious day shall dawn on us we shall need this earnest, but no longer; for

"When from the dust of earth we rise,
To take our mansion in the skies,"

we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. Until then may it be our inexpressible happiness, through grace abounding to the chief of sinners, to stand upon Mount Sion with the hundred and forty and four thousand, and the

innumerable multitude redeemed out of every nation, kindred and tongue; having the seal of our Father God deeply impressed upon us in heart, in life, and in practice.

But the solemn admonition of our subject demands our special attention. “Grieve not the holy spirit.” While the eternal God is infinitely above being moved by any such passions as grief, sorrow or disappointment, being of *one mind, and none can turn him,* that spirit begotten in his saints, which is an emanation from him, can be grieved. In Noah it strove with a world lying in wickedness, and devoted to awful destruction. In Lot, his righteous soul was vexed with the ungodly deeds of those among whom he dwelt in Sodom. This holy spirit, as it has existed in all the holy prophets since the world began, has been resisted by the generation of vipers, who do always resist the Holy Ghost; they fight against God, resist God, &c., but they cannot grieve nor change the immutable God, for he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, and God will hold them in derision; but the spirit begotten of God in his people can be grieved, burdened and sorrowful. For example, witness the case of our blessed Lord in incarnation; he rejoiced in spirit, he groaned in spirit, &c. In all the saints also may be found the same *spirit of God* which was in Christ;, and that susceptibility to sorrow and grief implied in our subject. From the world the saints expect persecution, and in the world tribulation; it does not grieve them when they realize such opposition from that quarter; but they rejoice and give thanks to God that they are accounted worthy thus to suffer for the sake of Christ. The exhortation in our subject is not therefore to the men of the world; let them rage and waste the fury of their spite; but the spirit of God in the hearts of all his saints is grieved when they witness the departure of their brethren from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; they are deeply afflicted when they see any in whom they have had confidence as christians giving heed to seducing

spirits, and doctrines of devils; or when any who profess to know and love the truth depart from a gospel walk and correct deportment. Christians too frequently inflict deep wounds upon the hearts of their brethren by an unbecoming course in life and deportment. Indeed, examples have not been lacking within the last twenty years in the church of Christ. An awful disregard of the admonition before us has marked the course of very many who have now gone out from us, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. Christians are often grieved in spirit with the corruptions of their own natures, indwelling sin; and perhaps this is the most prolific source of all their grief.

To avoid grieving the holy spirit of God, in the sense of this admonition, requires that all the saints should walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. That we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive. That we walk no more as other Gentiles walk - in the vanity of their mind. That ye put off concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. And putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouths. By indulging in any of those things discountenanced by the apostle, or by neglecting anything enjoined, will necessarily grieve the holy spirit of God, whereby they are sealed unto the day of redemption.

O that the Lord may enforce this important admonition on all his dear children! We feel our need of its special application

to our heart, and we would, in the language of the apostle, beseech our brethren to attend to these things. Let all our arrows be hurled at Babylon, and our artillery thunder against the hidden things of dishonesty; let us fight the good fight, and never, under pretension of divine influence, cease to contend against principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places; but while valiant for the truth, and ever hostile to the spirit of compromise with Zion's foes, let brotherly love continue among all those whose calling is by a vocation from God, to one hope of our calling. And as the apostle closed this chapter, so close we this article in his words; (not that we pretend to write by inspiration as be wrote, but because we wish to be guided and directed by apostolic precept and example;) "Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
June 1, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 619 – 626

HAGGAI 1:6

Brother Beebe: If it will not interfere with other matter, you will oblige me by giving your views on Haggai 1:6: "Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages, earneth wages to put into a bag with holes."

I. W. Bayly.
Princess Anne, Md.
Feb. 16, 1864.

This message was sent to Zerubbabel, the governor of Jerusalem, and to Joshua, the priest, and through them to the people of Judea, in the second year of the reign of Darius, king of Persia, admonishing them to proceed with the work of building the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem. The work had been commenced under the patronage of Cyrus, by whose hand God had delivered Judah from her seventy years of captivity in Babylon, but hindered by the adversaries of Judah, who had taken offence because their proffered services to help build had been rejected by Zerubbabel and Joshua, and, in revenge, they charged them with disloyalty to the king and succeeded in procuring an edict, or injunction, from the king causing the work to stop, but God sent the prophet Haggai with a command to go on with the work. This prophet is urging his divinely authorized admonition, "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house shall be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways." And of the things which they were to consider, whether it were better for them

to obey God or men, mark the dealings of God with them in their disobedience. How had they fared while the work was suspended through fear of the human government claiming the right to dictate in this matter? This suspension lasted from the time of the decree of Artaxerxes until the second year of the reign of Darius, and during that period God had withheld from them the blessings provided in his covenant for their obedience, and had sent upon them the judgments in that covenant provided for disobedience. The scarcity of bread among them was not because they had sown too sparingly, for they had sown much, but brought in little. God in judgment had withheld the rains and dew, and suffered not the earth to yield to them its bounteous harvests. This is one thing they were called upon to consider. Another matter for serious consideration was, that what they did eat was forbidden to satisfy their appetites. “Ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink.” Neither in eating nor drinking could they be satisfied. “Ye clothe you, but there is none warm.” They could prosper in nothing. Even the hireling who earned wages could not permanently invest them; their money was put into bags with holes, so that it was lost. Now God commands them to consider these his dealings with them, and bear in mind that “the way of the transgressor is hard.” God would not allow them, as his peculiar people, to prosper in disobedience. How true the testimony of them as an inconsiderate people is given in the first chapter of Isaiah, more inconsiderate than the very ox, and even the stupid ass reproved them. “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.” God had promised them corn and wine and oil if they were obedient to him, and assured them that the willing and obedient should eat the good of the land, but the same covenant provided that if they were disobedient he would send the sword, the famine and the pestilence. Under their then present circumstances it became them soberly to consider whether there was not

clear and palpable evidence that God disapproved of their disobedience. How astonishing, that having so recently returned from their seventy years of captivity in Babylon, they should so soon require to be reminded of their duty to obey God by his judgments. They were a carnal, but typical people, and their waywardness as a stiff-necked and rebellious people but too plainly points to the inconsistency, disobedience and backslidings of the spiritual Israel of God under the new covenant in this the gospel dispensation, and the frequent chastisements to which we are subjected for our wanderings. These lessons are written and left on record for our instruction and admonition, and although the new covenant under which we live is a better one, containing better promises, and in it God has promised to be merciful to our unrighteousness, and that he will remember our iniquities no more, yet with equal certainty he has provided that he will, in parental love and covenant faithfulness, visit our iniquities with the rod, and our sins with many stripes.

We learn from this record of God’s ancient people, or we should if we but considered our ways as God commanded them to consider theirs, that our comforts, joy and spiritual prosperity, though not for our good works, yet are inseparably connected with our faithful obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ. Can the child of God be happy in disobedience? Can the Christian prosper when indifferent to the honor of his Lord and Master?

Let us look about us and consider, Have we sown much? Alas, perhaps too much have we sown to the flesh, from which we are reaping corruption; food that will not satisfy the cravings of a child of God. Have we drank from broken cisterns, and found that the streams of earth cannot satisfy like the streams of that river which make glad the city of God? Have we wrapped us in a cloak, or garments of Babylonish texture? Can Christians feel warm and

comfortable in a Babylonish garment? Have we upon the legal principle been working for wages? How have we husbanded our gains? What have we laid up in store against the time of need? Let us consider that it does not become us to live in ceiled houses, while the church of God is neglected and the ways of Zion mourn; that we are not to court the smiles of princes, potentates or monarchs at the expense of our sacred allegiance to the King eternal, the only wise God our Savior, nor to barter away or yield one particle of what he has revealed in his holy word, to save from the rack, the torture, the scaffold or the stake these poor, frail, dying bodies. “He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it (Matt. 10: 30).” “Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God (Psalms 100: 22,23).”

Middletown, N.Y., April 1, 1864.
Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 6
Pages 14 – 16

HEBREWS I. 3.

“Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.”

Without professing to have any extraordinary light on this very sublime and expressive text, we will, in compliance with the desire of a brother, offer a few reflections on the subject.

In the preceding verses of this chapter, the inspired writer calls the attention of the “holy brethren” addressed, to the inspiration of God, by which the Scriptures of both the Testaments have been presented. God spake to our fathers by the prophets, and that same God has spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds. Peter informs us that the Spirit of Christ which was in the prophets testifying, is the Spirit by which Christ himself spake, or by which he reveals eternal things to his children. Of him it was written, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek.” That Spirit, in his anointing which was on him as the Head, without measure in all its boundless and eternal fullness and infinity, is, in a measure, upon all the members of his mystical body; for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. As the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets, so it is also in the apostles; and, in their measure, in all the children of the living God; for a measure of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit with all. God spake to the fathers by the prophets, and God has spoken to us by, and in the person of his Son. As in his Sonship, which we understand to relate to his Mediatorial character or identity, he is the only begotten Son

of God, so he is by birthright the legitimate heir of all things, and the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. As he is the unspeakable gift of God to the church, with all his fullness, so the apostle says to the church, All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. By whom also he made the world; for "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

Who being the brightness of his Father's glory. All the glory of the invisible Godhead centers in him; there is not an attribute of eternal Deity, or a perfection of the eternal Father, that is not found in him. This also agrees with what God has revealed to his people in their experience, as stated by the great apostle to the Gentiles. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in your hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." The same power which God displayed in creating the world, is required to shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. Light makes manifest, and this light alone can manifest to us the knowledge of the glory of God; and all the knowledge of the glory of God that he has ever manifested to us, has been in the face of Jesus Christ. There is no other medium through which God's glory, or his eternal perfections, are or can be made known to us. This light which reveals it is life; for in him was life, and the life was the light of men. "And this is life eternal that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Hence, it is that in an unregenerated state none can see the kingdom of God; all are in darkness, and under the power of darkness, until translated into this marvelous light. Such is the darkness of the natural mind, that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. All who are quickened by the Holy Spirit, are

made to see the glory of God in Christ; but when God shines in the hearts of his children, they not only behold that God is glorious in Christ, but the brightness of the glory of God shines in the face of our adorable Redeemer. The brightness of his glory expresses to us the full and eternal radiance, which the eye has not seen, the ear has not heard, and of which the heart of man has no adequate conception. This knowledge of his glory can never enter the human mind by the natural avenues which convey intelligence to the natural man. It is a pure revelation by the Spirit, and can never be learned as a science. But when this revelation is made, then all the perfections of the eternal Godhead beam forth with heavenly refulgence in the face of Jesus Christ. Not an attribute or perfection of the uncreated Godhead is known to us anywhere else, for as he is the Mediator between God and men, there is no other medium through which divine knowledge or spiritual communication is made to men. The holiness, truth, love, justice, immutability, power, omniscience and eternity of God, all shine resplendent in his face. Hence the prophetic description of his advent, by Isaiah, to the church, “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” But here is not only the brightness of his Father’s glory; but he is the express image of his person. An image is something perceptible, to the children of men. Christ in his manifestation to the church is called the image of the invisible God, and in our text he is called the express image. No man hath seen the Father at any time; that is, as we understand, only as he is revealed or manifested in Christ. But he who hath seen the Son, hath seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and the Father are one. Men are forbidden to make to themselves any image of the invisible God, for it is the exclusive prerogative of Christ to reveal him. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. All the fullness of the

Godhead dwells in him bodily; and the church is complete in him.

“And upholding all things by the word of his power.” In the broadest sense of the terms, all things in heaven and in earth, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones or dominions, things visible or invisible, all were made by him, and for him, and by him they all consist. As without him there was not anything made that was made, so without him nothing is sustained, supported or upheld. As no power of men or angels was required to assist him in creating the worlds, so neither is their agency required to uphold the worlds that he has made. Our text assures us that they are upheld in the same manner in which they were made, namely, by the word of his power. He said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” Thus the word of his power was manifested in creation; and in upholding all things he speaks the word, and it stands fast. He commands, and it is done. Such exhibitions of the word of his power, and of the power of his word, were made by him when here in the flesh, when he called Lazarus from the dead, raised up the widow’s son, silenced the raging tempest, and even when on the cross, at the sound of his voice, the rocks were rent, the graves were opened, the dead were raised, and earthquakes literally rocked the world. That voice is still omnipotent. The dead hear it, and they that hear do live; his sheep hear his voice, and he gives to them eternal life. Saul of Tarsus, though breathing out slaughter against the saints, heard it, and felt its omnipotence. Its power is often felt and witnessed by his saints in speaking comfort and peace to them, and in causing their hearts to burn while he communes with them by the way. They are born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever. The word of his power may also indicate his supreme authority, having all power in heaven and in earth, to reign as well in providence as in grace. He is the King of kings, as well as the

King of saints. All things are put under him, and he has power, in his Mediatorial supremacy, over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given unto him. In full possession of all this power and might and majesty, he came down from heaven to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. This work was to save his people from their sins; for this, he said, is the will of the Father, that of all he hath given me, I should lose nothing. In the execution of this work, the purging the sins of his people was involved. He came not to save them in their sins, but from their sins. Hence, he must needs purge them, and in doing this, his blood must be shed, for nothing short of his blood can purge our conscience from dead works, to serve the living God. The inefficiency of all other blood to accomplish this work had been abundantly demonstrated. It was found to be impossible that the blood of bulls and goats, those victims which under the law and by divine authority had been shed continually upon the altars of Israel, could take away sins; therefore, of necessity, he must give himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Therefore, he did, through the eternal Spirit, offer himself without spot to God, and by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified. When he had done all this, when he had by himself purged our sins, for it could not be done by proxy, or by another, to him alone as the nearest of kin did the right of redemption belong, when by himself he had purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. The great work of redemption being accomplished, and the salvation of his people finished and complete, he has set down. Thus when the work of creation was accomplished, God rested from all the works that he had made; so, salvation being finished, Christ has set down. But his seat is on the right hand of Majesty, He has set down with his Father on his throne, showing that his mediatorial work is approved, ratified and effectual. As evidence that he is

exalted to be a Prince and a Savior to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins, the Holy Spirit is sent down from heaven, to abide forever with the saints. Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.

We have thus expressed our views on the text proposed, as clearly as, in so small a space, we are capable of doing. Let those who read, carefully compare what we have written with the Scriptures of truth, and if in their judgment we are not sustained by the standard of truth, let them not rail upon us; but in a kind and brotherly manner point out whatever of error they may detect.

Middletown, N. Y.
March 1, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 308 - 313

HEBREWS 2:1-3

Brother Beebe: If convenient, please give your views on Hebrews 2:1-3: “Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.”

Many of us, I fear, are neglecting this great salvation, and timely admonition is needed, and, if properly given, would, I hope, be blessed of God.

Your brother in Christ,
D. Bartley.
Laconia, Ind. January 21, 1864.

Reply: The declaration and admonition presented in our text are a deduction from the facts recorded in the preceding chapter, as implied in the introductory word, *Therefore.* A careful perusal of the foregoing chapter will convince the intelligent reader that the conclusion is just and unavoidable. God at sundry times and in divers manners spake to the fathers by the prophets; among the prophets by whom God spake to the patriarchs, Moses occupies a very conspicuous place; as that prophet, messenger or angel, by whom his laws were communicated to the tribes of Israel. The term *angels*are sometimes applied to the commissioned messengers by whom divine communications were made to the people of God. But, whether we consider the term as applicable to the prophets, or those heavenly messengers spoken of in the first chapter, as an order of beings distinct from men, and who were sometimes sent with messages

from the throne of God, in either case Christ is far superior to them. As the Son of God, all the angels of God are commanded to worship him. He "Being so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." A name belongs to him at which every knee shall bow, of things in earth and things in heaven. In view of the superior excellency of Christ over all beings in heaven and earth, seated in matchless power and majesty upon a throne which is forever and ever, on which he presides, God over all, and blessed forever; his instructions are worthy of more profound reverence and unquestionable obedience than the words of holy men or even holy angels. In the third chapter we are told that Jesus, as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, as he who hath builded the house hath more honor than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after: but Christ as a Son over his own house; whose house are we, etc. In view then of the disparity between Moses and Christ, we are to consider the declaration in Chapter 10, Verses 28,29. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who shall disregard or trample upon the authority of the Son of God? Although it be fully demonstrated in the gospel that Christ has redeemed his people from under the law of Moses, from the law of sin and death, and they can no more come into that condemnation who have passed from death unto life; yet they are under law to Christ, and ought therefore to give (not less, but) the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard; lest at any time we should let them slip. This additional obligation is insisted on throughout this epistle. See Chapter 12, Verses 25-29. "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much

more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.

The obligation is upon all who have heard, that is, all who have passed from death unto life, and are gathered into the spiritual kingdom, as the spiritual Israel of God. For, "They that hear shall live." Those who have heard and so live ought therefore to give the more earnest heed to the things spoken; namely the things which began to be spoken by the Lord. Things which our Lord Jesus Christ has enjoined upon his redeemed family, things embraced in his precepts and examples, and embraced in his law which he has written in their heart; and are faithfully recorded in the New Testament. The doctrine, discipline, ordinances, admonitions, exhortations and instructions which can be clearly traced back to him, but no farther. They were not found in the Sinai Covenant, the law of Moses, or the Levitical priesthood; but they began to be spoken by the Lord. The law which had a shadow of these things was given by Moses; but grace and truth were brought by Jesus Christ. He first enacted his laws for the government of his church and kingdom, and then commissioned his apostles who heard him to teach all baptized believers to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them. The whole revelation of salvation by grace, and all the counsel and purpose of God in that great salvation are revealed in and through him. All began with him, and has been duly confirmed to the saints in all subsequent ages by inspired apostles who have been

commissioned by him to preach his gospel in all the world, for a witness to all nations. What began to be spoken by the Lord has been abundantly confirmed to us by his apostles, whose testimony has been attended with signs and wonders, as declared in their commission. God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to his own will.

We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. We are yet in the flesh, subject to infirmities, and amid the vanities of the world, the temptations of Satan, and the popular errors and delusions of anti-christ, of which the saints are commanded to beware. We are liable, especially at times, to let some of the things which we have heard slip. The primitive disciples betrayed this weakness. They had repeatedly heard the Lord say that he was to suffer and die, and rise again on the third day, but in the trying hour they had let these declarations slip, until they were again reminded of them, and then remembered they that he had told them when he was yet with them that these things should be accomplished. And the very apostles would have been utterly incompetent to confirm all these things to us if it had not been for the gift of the Holy Ghost whose work it was to bring all these things to their remembrance. It is important that the saints should hold these things fast at all times, and at no time let them slip for a moment: in times of refreshing; and in times of dearth and declension; in times of enlargement, and in times of persecution. The sacred charge is upon them to hold them fast; and to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and not be again entangled with the yoke of bondage.

For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense

of reward; how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation? This *if* does not imply a doubt; for it positively affirmed, as before quoted: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." The justness of their recompense was meeted to them according to the provisions and penalties of the law they were under. It provided for all who were or are under it that, if they were obedient they should live and be prospered with health, peace and plenty of temporal mercies; but if disobedient, they should be visited with sword, pestilence and famine, and be cut off and die. True the saints are not now under a conditional law or covenant that can show no mercy, but they are under law to Christ. "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2)." The law which God has written in the inward parts of his children in the new and better covenant does provide mercy; whereas Moses' law knew no mercy, and its transgressors died without mercy because the law could show none. But in the new covenant it is plentifully provided. "I will," saith God, "be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." Still the law of Christ provides a just recompense of reward for every transgression of his law. If my children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgment; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me." It is not in a legal or judicial sense, but in parental faithfulness. As many as he loves he rebukes, and scourgeth every son that he receiveth. None escape chastisements at his Fatherly hand but bastards. "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the

father chasteneth not?" God will not suffer his faithfulness to fail, and it is not possible that any of his children shall escape his rod who neglect his great salvation; or who let slip what he has spoken.

The things which we have heard, including the laws of the kingdom of Christ with all his institutions, ordinances, precepts and examples are imperatively enjoined upon all his disciples, none of them can be violated with impunity. A just recompense of reward, according to the provisions of his law, is certain to follow every transgression, and there is no escape to those who heedlessly let these admonitions slip. A vigilant attention to what we have heard, and a dutiful obedience to the laws of the kingdom of Christ is the only salvation from the rod.

If we heedlessly let what we have heard slip in regard to the doctrine of salvation by sovereign grace, we are liable to drift into the gulf of Arminianism, or if we neglect his precepts, we as a chastisement shall be filled with our own ways, as was Ephraim. But if we would escape these chastisements we must observe the rule given. "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound; they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather brethren give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall not fall (I Peter 1:5-10)."

Middletown, N.Y.,
July 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 6
Pages 67 - 72

HEBREWS II. 15.

We confess that we have no special light upon the text proposed. From the context, however, it will be seen that the text relates to the object of the incarnation and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He did not visit our guilty world, and suffer on the cross, without having an object to accomplish, and that object was, to deliver those who through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. In order to do this, he took on him the seed of Abraham. Not the children of the flesh, for Paul says, Romans ix. 7, 8, "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called: that is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all. As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." - Romans iv. 16, 17. "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The seed of Abraham therefore, thus defined, were taken on the Redeemer when he came in the flesh, and for them he suffered on the cross. They are spoken of in the connection of our text, as his "many sons," which he was to bring to glory, and for whom, "by the grace of God he tasted death." And they are also in this connection called "the children," and "his brethren." These were subject to bondage through fear of death. For the wages of sin is death, and they had all sinned, and had just cause to fear the execution of the sentence which was against them. The object of Christ's coming and suffering, was to save them from their sins, to bear their sins in his own body on the tree, and to put them

away by the sacrifice of himself, by tasting death for every one of them. And thus was he, through death, to destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

In this work of redemption and deliverance, he hath triumphed gloriously; and upon this ground they receive the spirit, not of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, Abba, Father. And they are exhorted to "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage." - Gal. v. 1. The perfect love of God commended in the gift of his dear Son, and communicated to the saints by regeneration, casteth out fear. Fear hath torment, but the perfect love of God shed abroad in his children, overcomes it, and casts it out. The object therefore of Christ's life in the flesh, and under the law, and of his death and suffering in the flesh, is attained. The great trumpet is blown; the jubilee proclaimed; the prison doors are opened, and the prisoners are brought out of their prison houses. And there is therefore no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Rom. Viii.)

"Jehovah has triumphed, his people are free!"

"Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." And we brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the free woman. (Gal. v. 28.) "Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." - Isa. Iii. 2.

Middletown, N. Y.
Nov. 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 260 - 261

HEBREWS 4:1,2.

Reply to Sister Walker, on Hebrews 4:1,2.

"Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

The inspired writer in comparing the typical with the gospel dispensation, shows that the former, although a carnal people, having but a worldly sanctuary, were with their ordinances and service figurative. Having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very [or exact] image of the things to which they pointed, they could never make, with their perpetual sacrifices, the comers to their altars perfect; but still they bore a striking typical resemblance to the things which they prefigured.

Israel under the first covenant was typical of the spiritual Israel, whose circumcision is not outward in their flesh, but inward, in their hearts, not made with hands, but in the spirit, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Their consecration as the people of God, chosen in the flesh of Abraham, and heirs of the promised rest, in the land of Canaan, was beautifully emblematic of the spiritual seed of Christ, which were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and in their relation to him, heirs of an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away. In all that is written of the carnal Israel, something may be found pointing to corresponding realities in the spiritual, or anti-typical Israel under the new covenant dispensation. Their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and their wearisome journey through the wilderness, and their final rest in the land of Canaan, with their constant

inclination to murmur, and rebel against God, and the judgments visited upon them for their infidelity and idolatry, all foreshadowed the waywardness of the children of God under the gospel dispensation. The failure of the unbelieving Israelites, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, to enter and rest in the promised land of Canaan is urged as an admonition to the people of God,. under the gospel dispensation, to "labor to enter into rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."

The rest prefigured by the land of Canaan, and by the Jewish sabbaths, is not, as some have supposed, the state of ultimate happiness which awaits the saints in the consummation of glory, for that ultimatum cannot be dependent in any degree upon contingencies of any kind. Christ has engaged by irrevocable decree to raise up at the last day, to that divine abode, all that his Father has given him. Canaan could not prefigure such a state of uninterrupted blessedness; for there was much fighting, and many sore conflicts to be endured in that land; neither could the Jewish sabbaths, for they were often desecrated, subjecting those who violated them to pains and penalties, very unlike the perfect security of the saints in glory. But we are informed in the connection of our subject that those times and places of rest under the old covenant pointed to and typified the rest which remains under the gospel dispensation to the people of God, into which they who believe have entered.

The argument of the inspired writer of our text is that in the type, the Lord swore in his wrath that the unbelieving Israelites should not enter into his rest, so that they could not enter in because of unbelief; thus representing that the rest which is enjoined in the gospel cannot possibly be entered or enjoyed in the absence of faith. As none but those who are born of God have, or possibly can have, that faith

which is the fruit of the Spirit, none but they can possibly know experimentally anything of spiritual or gospel rest. And even the saints can only enjoy it when their faith predominates over the infidelity of their nature. On this very account the admonition comes to the saints, to those holy brethren who are partakers of the heavenly calling, to "fear, lest a promise being left them, of entering into his rest, any of them should seem to come short of it."

His rest, or the rest which God has promised to his people, is said to be glorious. Not only is it a respite from labor and bondage, but a confident reliance on Christ, as a full and sufficient Savior, on his atoning blood for the remission of our sins, on his perfect righteousness for our justification before God; his Spirit bestowed on us in our new birth, to qualify us to appreciate and enjoy spiritual things; a firm reliance on his promises, and a complete cessation from all our own legal works, and legal thoughts. Such a rest is promised to the people of God, and that promise is left on record for them. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Matthew 11:28,29. While the wicked are like the troubled sea that cannot rest, our Lord giveth his beloved rest. That this rest is provided for the people of God, and that the promise of entering it is left for the comfort of the people of God, is certain.

Why then are we admonished to fear lest those unto whom it is promised should seem to come short of it? Every child of God, while in the flesh, knows what this liability means. Such is the nature of the rest, that it is only entered and enjoyed when and while we believe. Whenever our doubts and fears prevail, we are tossed with tempest, and not comforted; labor, toil and unrest, weariness, fainting and distress will certainly come upon us. How can we rest upon a promise

which faith does lay hold on and appropriate to us? God gave a promise of rest in the land of Canaan to the Hebrews, but it was seldom they relied on that promise while in the wilderness. When God made for them a wondrous pathway through the Red Sea, or displayed some wonderful power in their deliverance, they were for the moment satisfied that God would fulfill his promises; but when their way was intercepted by dangers and difficulties, they invariably murmured and said that they were brought into the wilderness to die.

How very like the murmuring tribes are we, when by some signal display of God's delivering power, our faith rises above our fears, we feel strong in the Lord, and confess how slow of heart we have been to believe. Yet while believing we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then we find the place where he feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon. But as soon as the gathering clouds appear, and hide the sun from our sight, we recall our doubts and fears, and sometimes even doubt that we have ever seen the sun, or known its light. Do we not at such times *seem to come short of the promised rest?*

The admonition, "Let us therefore fear," is not that we should cherish doubts and nurse our unbelief; but resist them; for it is said in verse 11, "Let us labor therefore to enter into rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." The example referred to is that of the carnal Hebrews in the type; they could not enter into Canaan because of unbelief. Nor can we enter into our spiritual rest while we cherish our doubts and fears. It is impossible for us to rest, only in a confident unwavering reliance on our God. Whether the people of God enjoy it or not, that rest remaineth for them. Do any of the tried and tempted, doubting, fearing, trembling saints enquire how they are to labor to enter into it? To such we say, it is not by searching for some good thing in your

flesh, or fleshly nature; for Paul himself could not find it there. Not by looking to Mount Sinai; for if so much as a beast should touch that mountain it must die. The law is a ministration of death. Not by making a pilgrimage to the empty sepulchre of the dear Redeemer; you will not find him there; for he has risen. Seek not for the living among the dead. Our glorious Leader has given us directions. He says, "Come unto me." Come away from Sinai, come away from yourself, come away from everything else, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith. To perform such labor as this, you not only need to have life, but he who calls you unto him commands you to take on you his yoke. You cannot rest under the yoke of bondage which entangled the Galatian saints; for no yoke but that of Jesus is easy, no burden but his is light. How can you labor to advantage unless you put on his yoke? And when in his yoke, equally yoked with believers, you have confessed your allegiance to him, then "learn of him." He will teach you as never man taught. He is meek, and will teach you to be meek; he is lowly, and will teach you lessons of humility; and in that meek and lowly spirit which you learn of Jesus, as God is true, you shall find rest to your soul.

Now remember all that faith which is indispensable to gospel rest is of God; it is the faith of the Son of God, and the fruit of his Spirit of which you are born again, and without which it is impossible to please God. And all that infidelity, unbelief, doubts, fears and lack of confidence which disturbs, disquiets and distresses you, is of your own carnal nature. When faith lifts up her eyes to the eternal hills, joy, peace and rest possesses your heart; you forget yourself, lost in the contemplation of eternal things, and like Paul when elevated to the third heaven, you are so perfectly stripped of all selfishness that you are unconscious of having a body, or whether in it or not you cannot tell. But when doubts and unbelief prevail, then you know where the body is, and you

begin to worry and fret about yourself. The way of salvation by grace looks lovely and beautiful, but, O, says old self, how do I know that I have any interest in it? What is that to thee? Faith leaves that all with the Lord; and we venture the assertion that no child of grace ever entered into gospel rest, except when his faith was sufficiently strong to leave all personal interest with God. Faith says, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Isaiah 26:3,4.

When our confidence in God is firm and unshaken, we rest in that confidence. But when we doubt and fear, and even dispute all that he has ever done for us, we become restless and comfortless. In our firm reliance on God, on his promises, on his work that he has wrought in us, we sweetly and peacefully rest; but when we are tempted to distrust in God, and indulge our doubts and fears, we *seem* to come short of that rest. And when we consider the strong and constant tendency of our carnal minds to doubt and dispute what God has said and what he has done, do we not find that we have reason to fear that our rest will be broken? "Let us therefore fear" such insidious and treacherous propensities of our carnal or fleshly minds. These are what the word admonishes us to fear, for these are what invade, disturb and prevent our rest, so that although we have the promise and oath of God who cannot lie, to rest upon, we seem to come short, and do indeed often come far short of that rest which such gracious promises are sufficient to secure.

"For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them." To them the promise of temporal rest was preached; and the preaching of the gracious promises of God is gospel preaching; but gospel preaching cannot bring rest and assurance to those who do not believe. The Hebrews could not be profited by the preaching of the promises when they

had no faith in them, and did not believe them; they were not mixed with faith in them. It is even so with Christians now under the gospel dispensation. Unless we have faith and that faith predominating over our doubts, we cannot be profited in a way of rest when we hear the gospel preached. We will ask the doubting, fearing, trembling Christian, how has it been with you? You have heard the promises preached, they have seemed great and precious. Did they bring you rest? O no. Why? Because I could not believe they were for me. Well then you could not enter into rest, because of unbelief. You saw that they were blessed provisions for somebody, and longed to be that somebody. So instead of entering into rest, you seemed to come short of it. Can you find any other reason why you could not rest in the preached word, but your lack of faith and confidence to appropriate its consolation to your own case? The promise you heard preached to the weary and heavy laden, and you were weary and heavy laden; but you did not feel satisfied that it was for you. It was preached to all who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; you had an ear to hear it preached to the churches, you saw and were fully satisfied that it was for the churches of the saints; but your unbelief told you that it was not for you, and so you failed to rest upon it, or to be comforted by it, because of your unbelief. The promises to the carnal Israelites, which were typical of the gospel, did not profit that carnal people, because they had no faith to believe them, and their carcasses fell in the wilderness and they entered not into the goodly land of rest.

And have we not reason to fear there are thousands of God’s dear children, who are born of the Spirit, who love the truth, who have an ear to hear, and who desire above all things to be numbered among, and in fellowship with the children of God, whose mortal bodies fall in the wilderness, without ever entering into the church in her gospel organization? Not so; not because the laws and order of the kingdom of Christ

forbids them; not because they do not love her gates, and earnestly long for the milk and honey which forever flows within her sacred borders; but simply because they listen to and are swayed by the infidelity of their own carnal minds, and reject the testimony of God. To all such a promise is surely left of entering into his rest; and although we see them hugging their chains and fetters, and, like Rachel, refusing to be comforted, still the promise is none the less unto them, and to their children, and unto all them which are afar off; yet they seem to come short of it. That is, of resting upon it, by entering in through the gates into the city, where they may have right to the tree of life, but continue to remain without among the dogs and sorcerers, and other bad companions. But the enquiry may be, what is to become of them? We answer, although their unbelief may prevent them from the enjoyment of rest, while here in the flesh, and deprive them of the communion of the church of God, so far at least as to seem to come short of it, still their unbelief cannot make the promises of God of none effect. Notwithstanding all their shortcomings, their spiritual and immortal life is hid with Christ in God. Into the promised rest which their unbelief has disqualified them for the enjoyment while here below, they shall be brought when Christ our Lord, in fulfillment of his gracious pledge, shall raise them up at the last day.

We would not confine the application of the admonition of our subject to those timid, trembling, doubting children of our God, whose unbelieving doubts and fears prevail to keep them from the bosom of the church, and from the enjoyment of the rest into which believers have entered; for there are very many who have walked for many years in the fellowship of the churches, and who have often witnessed the sweet comfort of resting confidentially and steadfastly on the promises of the gospel, who at times are driven by their doubts, fears and unbelief from their resting place, and are

tossed with tempests and not comforted. Their faith is sharply contested by their fears and unbelief; and at all such times they truly seem to come short of that rest which remaineth for the people of God. And they learn by experience that rest arises with the triumphs of their faith and confiding reliance on the God of their salvation, and declines with the prevalence of their doubts and fears.

Before we close this article, we will remark that, although there is no virtue in doubts and fears, no child of God, while in the flesh, is altogether free from them; nor is it possible that any but the heaven-born should ever be annoyed with such as we have described. They are the muddy streams which flow unbidden from our carnal nature, and war against the spirit of holiness which God has given to us. They are often excited by the tempter, and sometimes the saints are left to their buffetings, as a wholesome chastisement for our follies, or for the trial of our faith; but from whatever cause they may come, they disturb our repose, and disquiet and trouble the saints. But who ever heard of a hypocrite or unquickened person being troubled in this way? Should we meet with any who have long professed discipleship to Christ, who are strangers to the annoyance of doubts and fears, we could repose no confidence in their profession; and yet because we are troubled with them, what bitter things we write against ourselves.

We are to *strive* to enter into rest, by fighting valiantly the fight of faith, making war against our unbelief. “To you who are troubled,” the apostle says, “rest with us.” The apostles rested in God, and not in themselves. The direction of God is, “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you. “Trust in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.” “They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion that cannot be moved, but abideth forever.” Do you believe

what God the Lord hath spoken, that he rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky? Do you believe that “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms?”

“Then let the earth’s old pillars shake,
And all the wheels of nature break,
Our steadfast souls shall fear no more,
Than solid rocks when billows roar.”

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 397 – 404

HEBREWS IV. 1-12.

Mr. Beebe: My wife is an Old School Baptist and very much afflicted, and has been so for the last eight years, so that she does not have the privilege of hearing preaching often; you would confer a favor by giving your views on Heb. iv. 1-12.

Yours with respect,
E. CORY
Blooming Grove, Jan. 2, 1860.

Reply: "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left *us* of entering into rest, any of you should seem to come short of it," &c. The inspired apostle describes the endless rounds of legal ceremonies, rites, sacrifices, toils and labors required of the carnal Israelites under the Levitical law as a state of bondage and fatigue, allowing not a moment's respite or rest, for the law not only required a perfect obedience, but also a perpetual labor. But the gospel in direct contrast in that respect, is set forth as a rest that remaineth for the people of God. The former dispensation is set forth by the six days labor in the creation of the world, and the six days of every week in which the Israelites were commanded to labor and to do all their work; also by their tedious wanderings for forty years in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, and other significant and impressing figures which are used in illustration. While the rest which the gospel presents and which remained after the expiration of the legal covenant to the people of God, is exemplified by the hallowed day in which God rested from all the work of creation; and the seventh day of every week to the Hebrews, also the possession of the land of milk and honey, to the Israelites after their tiresome journeys in the wilderness. Indeed, all the sabbath days, sabbatic years and other legally appointed times of rest to the carnal Israelites, were figurative of that

spiritual rest which believers in Christ enter when fully and experimentally delivered from the toil and bondage of the law. With this brief explanation of the types employed in our subject, as a key to the admonition in our text, we pass to notice the entering into the rest which is left unto the people of God.

At the expiration of the old covenant dispensation all the rites and ceremonies of that covenant were abolished. The shaking of the heavens and the earth was to remove the things which are shaken that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. (Heb. xii. 27.) Of the things shaken and removed, the apostle includes the old covenant with all its rites and carnal commandments. (Heb. viii. 13; x. 9.) But the things which cannot be shaken remain. The covenant of grace and salvation in Jesus Christ, embracing the promise of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, made before the world began, could not be shaken. The kingdom prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world, as described and contrasted with the Sinai covenant in Heb. xii. 18-24, is a kingdom that cannot be shaken; for it shall never be destroyed nor left to other people. (Daniel ii. 44.) It shall stand forever. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” - Heb. xii. 27. While the commonwealth of Israel organized nationally under the covenant of works, as we have shown, could not rest, only in a ceremonial sense, the kingdom of Christ, embraced in the covenant of grace, is emphatically a kingdom of rest. “For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest forever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread.” - Psa. cxxxii. 13-15. The bread which is to sustain our earthly nature, is obtained by toil and labor, and by the righteous decree of God, man shall eat it in the sweat of his face, until he shall return unto the dust, &c.

But the bread of life which sustains those who belong to the kingdom which Jesus claims as his rest forever, is not obtained by toil and sweat, it cometh down from heaven, is freely given, and divinely blessed, to fill Zion's poor. "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." - Isa. xi. 10. The apostle finds a promise of rest to the people of God implied in the types, the entering into Canaan, the seventh day, &c., and this promise is exclusively to the people of God who shall all be righteous, for the wicked are like the troubled sea which cannot rest. But Paul says, "For we which have believed, do enter into rest." Again, "For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works as God did from his." When God had finished the six days of creation, he rested from all the works which he had made. Nothing more has been created; nothing more required to be created. So, when the people of God enter into God's rest, they find it a perfect cessation from all of their own legal works to commend them to divine favor, for Christ is their righteousness. He is made the righteousness of God unto them, and as the righteousness of God cannot be improved or made more perfect than it is, they have only to rest in it. When trembling at the startling thunders of Mount Sinai, before Christ was revealed to them as their righteousness, they labored hard and long.

"They toiled the precept to obey,
But toil'd without success."

Guilt-stricken and despairing with deep contrition they confessed their guilt, and the justice of the fiery doom assigned them by the holy law of God, while on their heart the crushing burden pressed them down. But while in this state, far from the reach of human aid, the blessed Savior appears in all the glory of the Father, in all the irresistible attractions of life and immortality, and his voice is heard, not

in the terror of Mount Sinai, not in bursting peals of wrath, but in the still, small sound, which thrills the heart with heavenly rapture and supreme delight, and his words are, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls, for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." - Matt. xi. 28,29. This is not a mere invitation, but a heavenly calling which cannot be resisted by any unto whom it is addressed, it is the King's word and full of power. At his word, the burden is removed from the heart, yea, a new heart is given, a new spirit is put within, and a new song breaks forth in sweetest melody of praise unto God and the Lamb. The toil-worn soul is now released from Moses' yoke, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear, and ceasing from all his own works to justify him before God or to meet the fiery demands of the law, he enters into that rest which remains for the people of God when all things else have passed away. This is the rest which Paul enjoyed, when he said to all the troubled saints at Thessalonica, Rest with us. Cease from your own works as God did from his. Come under the yoke (or law) of Christ, your King, learn of him, for he is meek and lowly; he will condescend to instruct you, and lead you about and keep you as the apple of his eye, as he did Jacob, and although he will stir up your old nest, and tear it to pieces, he will teach you to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint; for his yoke is truly easy, and his burden is light indeed.

Now for the admonition. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." We have seen that such a promise is left, and such a glorious rest remains for the people of God, but how can any of God's people even seem to come short of it? Much perplexity has been occasioned to some of God's people by mistaking the true import of the

admonition, by supposing that the rest remaining for the people of God, will not be entered until we reach the final consummation of our glory. But the apostle does not say, there shall a rest remain, &c., but “there remaineth therefore a rest.” The things that are shaken, are removed, and the kingdom of Christ is received, which is that Zion of which the Lord says, “This is my rest forever, here will I dwell.” It even now remaineth, and all true believers have entered into it, and in entering into it, they cease from their own works. But as in the type, the carnal Israelites who believed not the promise of entering into Canaan, could not enter in because of unbelief, their carcasses fell in the wilderness of Sinai; so the people of God seem to come short of gospel rest, whenever their doubts and fears and unbelief prevail. How can a child of God rest, confide and feel secure in the provision of the gospel while he doubts his personal interest in our Lord Jesus Christ? It is only when our faith triumphs over our unbelief that we confidently rest in the full security and blessed enjoyment of the house of our God. To doubt our calling of God, and our having been born again, fills us with trouble, darkness, and we recede from the place of our rest, and become entangled with the yoke of bondage, and find labor and fatigue, and until we are again delivered from our unbelief it is impossible for us to rest. But the moment our faith is renewed, or made to triumph over our doubts, we say, “Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.” The Jewish Sabbaths were designed to illustrate the rest which remains to the people of God. It was enjoined on them to rest from all their work, to kindle no fires, gather no manna, to do no manner of labor, nor were they permitted to think their own thoughts, nor to speak their own words. So in our Sabbath of gospel rest. We are to kindle no fires. “Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of my hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow.” - Isa. L, 2. Under the

gospel dispensation it is sabbath-breaking in this sense to kindle fires or get up revivals of our own kindling. When instead of waiting a visit or a message from the Lord, we think our own thoughts, make up our own creeds, speak or proclaim the vain imaginations of our own understanding, and speak our own words, we violate the gospel Sabbath law, and seem to come short of that rest which is promised to the people of God. But we are commanded to strive to enter into rest, by denying ourselves, by ceasing from our own works, and by trusting confidently in what God has said, and in what he has done.

"Go ye that rest upon the law,
And toil and seek salvation there;
Look to the flame that Moses saw,
And shrink, and tremble, and despair.

Let me retire beneath the cross,
Savior, at thy dear feet I'd lie,
And the keen sword that justice draws,
Flaming and red, shall pass me by."

Reviewing the whole subject, we think the christian will perceive that there is reason to fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest (experimentally), we may seem to come far short of it. But still, although the faith of God's people must be tried, and they have to experience much tribulation, and sore temptations, and often oppressed with doubts, and failing of the enjoyment of that sweet rest which we desire, the final triumph of the saints over all their doubts and fear, over all their sorrows and their sins, is secured in Christ, and their divine inheritance of glory is reserved in heaven for them; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time.

"O glorious hour! O blest abode,
Thus to be near and like my God,
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul."

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 310 - 315

HEBREWS IV. 12

Switzerland Co., Ind., Dec. 28, 1857.

Brother Beebe: Will you do me the favor to give your views on Hebrews iv. 12, especially on that part which speaks of the dividing asunder of soul and spirit? From the little experience I have had, I have been led to believe the word is a uniter of soul and spirit, at the present time. Now if you can inform me when it was, or when it will be, or how it is at the present time, a divider of soul and spirit, you will confer a great favor on your unworthy brother, if I may be so bold as to claim kindred with those of the household of God.

WM. W. HUSTON.

Reply: Whether we shall be able to satisfy the mind of brother Huston on the subject on which he has desired us to give our views, of course we cannot tell, but such views as we have we cheerfully submit to the consideration of himself and our readers generally. We do not remember of ever hearing the views of any of our brethren on the text, and we confess that we have generally regarded it as one of the most obscure passages in the New Testament, until now that our mind has been called especially to it, it seems to be presented to our mind more clearly. Of course we hold no one responsible for our views, and only give them as what occurs to our mind on the subject; if we are correct, the Scriptures will establish our view, but if we mistake the true import of the text, we rejoice to believe we have faithful and discriminating brethren to review us. The text reads thus:

"For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

“The word of God” is a term which is sometimes applied to the Scriptures, and sometimes to some special message from God, as when “the word of God came to the prophets, saying,” &c; but it also applies as a name and title to our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the essential Word of God. The *Logos* of the Scriptures, of whom it is said, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, the same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was nothing made that was made. (John 1:1-3) And in Rev. xix. 13, we are expressly informed that the name of the King of kings and Lord of lords, is called THE WORD OF GOD. That this name and title belongs to Christ as the Son of God, in his mediatorial character and relationship, as the one Mediator between God and men, is abundantly evident from the fact that it is only applied to him in his manifestation, or the revelation of him as the Lord from heaven, the begotten of the Father, and in connection with his mediatorial offices and work. In John i. we read, The Word was made flesh, or was revealed in the flesh, and became identified with flesh, and in him was life, and the life was the light of men. The term quick, used in our text, as applied to the Word of God, signifies vital, living, life, 8w., agreeing with the passages quoted above, and with the declaration 1 John v. 20, “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true: and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.” Thus fully justifying and confirming the testimony of our text, that the Word of God is quick, or life, or vital, and in perfect harmony with other titles given to and assumed by our divine Mediator; as “I am the Resurrection and the Life.” “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life.”

But the Word of God is not only quick, or vital, as having life, but as having eternal life, - that life which was with the

Father and was manifest as the Word of Life. (1 John i. 1,2.) “Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light.” - 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. The life of his body, the church, according to the record borne by the three in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, which three are One, and witnessed by the Spirit, the water and the blood, in earth, and these three agree in one. (1 John v.7,8.) “And this is the record that God hath given unto us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” - 1 John v. 11. His Son, as the Word of life, is the repository of all the spiritual and eternal vitality of his body, the church, and as the Head and life of the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all; his goings forth were of old, from everlasting.

Again, The Word of God is quick, as the fountain and source of spiritual, eternal life to his members, as the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who is a quickening Spirit. (1 Cor. xv. 45.) Possessing in himself the exclusive power to quicken whomsoever he will, “For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” - John v. 21. But while we witness the abundant testimony of the Scriptures that Christ is the Life of his people, we must bear in mind what he said to some of his murmuring disciples, “What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life.” - John vi. 62, 63. The words, therefore, which Jesus speaks to his disciples, emanating from him as the Head and fountain and source of all spiritual life, as Adam was the head and source to us of all human life, are quickening in their nature and effects, and as direct communications from him to them; they also are the Word of God. And to the Word of God all life-giving power to quicken dead sinners, is ascribed. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by

the word of God, which liveth [or is quick, or life-imparting,] and abideth forever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord abideth forever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." - 1 Peter i. 23-25. The word of God, then, having power to communicate eternal life to as many as the Father hath given to Christ, (see John xvii. 2, 3; v. 25; x. 27, 28,) "Verily verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live; for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and given him power to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Hence we perceive that the Word of God, which is both quick and powerful, is not the mere letter of the Scriptures, nor the publication by men of what God has spoken, but, as God spake by the prophets of old, so doth he now speak by his Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and his words come in the execution of his eternal purpose and counsel, "not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

But we pass to speak of the peculiar qualities or attributes of the Word of God, as stated in our text. It is not only quick or vital, and life-giving, but it is powerful, or full of power, possessing no less power than that word by which the heavens and the earth were spoken into existence, with all that they contain. It is not a word which those unto which it is addressed have power to resist or gainsay, but that by which the rocks are rended, the earth is made to quake, the sun is darkened at noon, the raging tempest is instantly calmed, graves are unlocked and their doors thrown open,

and the dead spring forth to life. It is his Word who hath power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life unto as many as the Father hath given him, and it cannot, therefore, be successfully resisted by men or devils.

“Sharper than any two-edged sword.” It is represented in the book of Rev. i. 16, and xix. 15-21, as a sharp two-edged sword going out of his mouth; but this, like all other figures, fails to fully set forth the power of the word which goeth forth from his mouth, - for his words are sharper than any two-edged sword. Paul says the sword of the Spirit is the word of God, piercing, even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit. On this part of the text, brother Huston desires us to dwell particularly, but in order to do so, we must defer our further remarks for another number.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 46 - 50

HEBREWS IV. 12

“The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Of the Word, and its quickening power and divine energy, we have already expressed our views, in the preceding number, reserving for the present article, some remarks on the peculiar power of the word of God to divide asunder the soul and spirit, joints and marrow, and to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

“Piercing, even to the dividing asunder.” As we have considered Christ, in his title as the essential Word of God, as the Head and Fountain of all spiritual, eternal life to the church, which is his body, and the words which he speaks to his people, as spirit and life, according to his declaration, (John vi. 63,) so the entering of his word is compared to a piercing, or a sharp sword. Those who have experienced its quickening operation, are sensible that they were by nature children of wrath even as others, that they were dead in sins, and in that state continued till the Word of life was spoken to them, with the same irresistible and almighty power as when he said, Let there be light, and there was light. Then the dead heard his voice, or word, and by it were quickened into life. Or in other words, they were born again of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Its powerful entrance is fitly represented as a piercing, or a pricking them in the heart, as at the day of pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, and many were pricked in the heart and cried, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Acts ii. 37, compared with Psalm xlv. 5, “Thine arrows are sharper in the

heart of the King’s enemies, whereby the people fall under thee.” This quickening operation of the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, has to do with the heart, and that in an experimental way. It does not merely cut to the heart, making a flesh wound which may be easily healed, as when Stephen preached, (Acts vii. 54,) but it enters the heart and makes sure work. The sword or word enters, and the dead hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. (John v. 25.)

“Dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit.” Dull as we may be to comprehend the soul of man, or to define either the spirit of man that is common to all men, or that spirit which is communicated by the new and heavenly birth, the word of God can and does make the discrimination, and if we have not mistaken its revelation, it pierces to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit. The natural spirit of man, which goeth upward, is what we understand is called the soul, and we shall not attempt to distinguish between the terms spirit and soul, when thus applied. But the word of God does clearly discriminate between the soul and spirit which is natural and common to all men, and that spirit which is the production of the new birth. That which is born of the flesh is divided asunder by the word, from that which is born of the Spirit, and the one is called flesh and the other spirit; the one is of the earth and earthly, the other is of the Spirit of God, and spiritual. The one is earthy, sensual and devilish, the other is spiritual, heavenly and Christ-like. In the one there is nothing good, in the other there is nothing but that is good. The one lusts against the other, and brings the child of God into captivity to the law of sin which is in the flesh. The one is in the image of the earthy Adam, and the other is after God, created in righteousness and true holiness. The Scriptures make this discrimination in the plainest terms, but still we are dull to comprehend their testimony, until the word comes to us, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost

and in much assurance. Then the sword of the Spirit divides, and we are taught to know that every heavenly emotion that we feel, every spiritual exercise, every divine impulse, every correct perception of God, of the way of life and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord, every display of the love of God shed abroad in us; instead of being a natural growth of the soul, is the legitimate fruit of the spirit which is born of the Spirit, and all within us that was against the Spirit of life which God has implanted in us, is the natural production of our depraved, fallen nature. The lusts of the eye, the corruptions of the flesh, and the pride of life, these are not born of God, but they are born of the flesh and they are flesh, and as many as are led by them and walk after them, shall die; but as many as through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, shall live. As many as have the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; but if any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. We think if our brother Huston will carefully consider this matter, he will perceive that the sword of the Spirit does not, as he had supposed, unite the soul with the spirit, that the inspired writer of our text was right, and his views were wrong. Just so far as we are led by the Spirit in our experience, we learn that there is as wide a distinction between our old man and the new, our inner and outer man, as between sin and holiness, as wide a distance as that between heaven and hell. The spirit being born of God cannot sin, because it is born of God, and because the seed abideth. It is of heavenly origin, and has no relish for sin, no inclination to sin, but it fights against all that is carnal and opposite to holiness, while the flesh and all our fleshly powers are prone to sin, as sparks fly upward. Hence the warfare in every one that is born of the Spirit. Brother Huston, we conclude, knows something about this warfare, and in it he has what we regard a clear illustration of this part of the text on which he desires us to dwell particularly.

But while we feel the powerful and piercing effects of the word, dividing asunder, separating and discriminating between that in us which is born of the flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, we have two most grand and glorious considerations to cheer and encourage us.

First. Although this Spirit wars against the flesh, and against all that is vile, sinful and ungodly, it never war's against holiness, against truth and righteousness, nor against the same Spirit, wherever it is found. Of the body of Christ it is said, There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. As this Spirit is one Spirit, so there is a vital and heavenly union and fellowship among all who possess it. They may hate the garments spotted with the flesh, in themselves and in their brethren; they may hate father and mother; wife and children, and their own life also, but if born of God, they cannot hate the spirit of life and immortality which God has implanted in them and in all their brethren. The love of the saints is not a carnal attachment, for the saints are called to mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to know no man after the flesh; the love of God shed abroad in christians by the Spirit, will commune with its kindred spirit as readily in a poor Ethiopian, as in the most renowned prince, and love the image of Jesus as dearly when found in a poor, despised outcast, as when found in our nearest or dearest earthly relative.

Second. As this spirit dwells in us now, producing a constant warfare with the flesh, the war will be over before long, and victory is certain to the new man. The opposition to holiness shall be subdued, these bodies, which to us are at present what Paul's body was to him, a body of this death, yet death itself shall be destroyed: the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and he that raiseth up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in us.

The discrimination made by the quick and powerful word of God, by which the saints are born again, is a divider asunder of joints and marrow. As the church of God, in her mystical union, is the body of Christ, so it is said of the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. (Col. ii. 19). But in order to do this, there must be a circumcision, by which our fleshly powers are cut off, for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. But this cutting off is effective, and all the saints, as the body of him in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power, in whom, also, ye are circumcised, with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead, and you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God; (Col. ii. 9-13, and iii. 4.) Here by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, there is a dividing of joints and marrow, so far as the old man is concerned, for Adam is the figure of him that was to come, which is Christ, and as the members of Christ are by joints and bands embodied in Christ, in our new and spiritual life, so by joints and marrow were we embodied in the earthly Adam, in our natural relation to him. But here is a cutting off, a circumcision, a dismemberment of the earthly Adam, and the members of Christ’s body are brought out of every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and brought by the word of God into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. (Eph. iv. 13.)

“And is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” That Christ who is, as we have contended, the essential Word of God, discerns the thoughts of all hearts, that he is able to search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men, was abundantly demonstrated when he was here in the flesh, and that he is still the discerner, now that he has ascended up on high, is a matter of unspeakable consolation to his people, for he knoweth how to succor them when they are tempted, which would not be the case if he could not discern the thoughts and intents of our hearts. All things are naked and open to his omniscient eye, even from everlasting to everlasting. But the words which he speaks to his people, are a transcript of himself, and they also are Spirit and they are life; they are a communication from himself to his members, in which of his fullness they all receive, and grace for grace, (John i. 16.) Therefore when he by his Spirit holds communion with his members by the way, he causes their hearts to burn within them. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The preparation of their hearts and the answer of their tongues are of him, and they have his mind and his Spirit, which searches all things, even the deep things of God. How often has our brother Huston and all the saints been joyfully surprised when he has shown himself to them, as it were through the lattice, and calmed the tempest that has distressed their mind; when his word has come to them so appropriately, so suited to their peculiar straits and trials, that they have been constrained to say, He is a refuge in distress and a very present help in all our troubles. Take the striking figure which eternal wisdom has provided, he is the Head over all things to the church, which is his body; and can the natural body of a man have thoughts or intents, or pains or joys, or any other sensations or emotions, and keep them concealed from the head? Certainly not. Well, Christ as our Head knows us altogether. His communications to us prove this, for his communications to us by his written word, through all the gifts which he has

bestowed are appropriate and well timed, never out of place, as they might be if he were not a discerner of the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

We will now submit what we have written to the consideration of brother Huston, and to all our readers, with our sincere desire and prayer that, so far as we have written in accordance with the word and Spirit of our divine Lord and Master, it may be made edifying and comforting to his dear people.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 50 - 56

HEBREWS VI. 1-3.

Brother David Richey, of Milford, Louisiana, desires to have our views on the above named text. We have given such views as we have on the subject in volume xv., No. 15, volume xxi., No. 3, volume xxiii., No. 6, volume xxv., No. 20, volume xxxi., No. 10, and volume xxxv., No. 18. But as those papers may not be accessible to brother Richey, we will briefly say that the *principles of the doctrine* which the saints are instructed to leave, we understand are the *types* on which the apostle had been dwelling in the preceding chapters; for the law had a shadow of good things to come and pointed to the doctrine of Christ, as the priesthood of Aaron and his sons, and the offerings made by them, all pointed to the one offering of Christ, by the which he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified, so that his one offering is never to be repeated; for since it was made, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. Therefore we can no longer lay a foundation for repentance, &c., by any of the offerings which were made for that purpose under the law or Levitical priesthood. "For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope." "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" – See chapter vii. 11. Now the saints are no more under the law of a carnal (fleshly) commandment; but in their High Priest, who is after the order of Melchisedec, they are made partakers of the power of his endless life.

Under the former law and priesthood, which could make nothing perfect, the offending Israelite could bring his offering to Aaron from year to year, and by it lay a foundation for legal repentance; but under the gospel dispensation and priesthood of Christ, if his one offering could fail, it would be

impossible to renew us again to repentance, as to do that would require that Christ should again offer himself in sacrifice, and be crucified anew, and thus be put to an open shame; and that is not possible. The imperfection and inefficiency of the law and Jewish priesthood to purge us from dead works, requires that we should leave all the ritual of Judaism, and pass on to perfection, which is found in nothing short of the gospel, and in the priesthood of him who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, to purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 2.
January 15, 1881

HEBREWS 6:4-6

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

The inspired writer of this text had been discoursing on the subject of a progression in the knowledge of divine things in the school of Christ, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, through the gifts bestowed upon the church; but he found some of the Hebrew saints who had been so long under Moses as a schoolmaster that they were exceedingly dull to comprehend the perfection of the gospel, for the old schoolmaster, the law, made nothing perfect. Like the pupil in school always studying the alphabet, dwelling on the form and sound of the letters, but never instructed in combining them to spell words or to express sentences, or like children accustomed to be fed on milk, but never having their senses exercised to use meat. The principles or elements of the perfection of the gospel of Christ, such as repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptism, and of laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, all these had been set forth in the types of the law and predictions of the prophets, but as the types were only shadows of good things to come, the body or substance being Christ, as set forth in the gospel, therefore he says, leaving the principles of the doctrine which were in the types, as the first rudiments or first lessons given, Let us go on to perfection; like the child in school who, after learning his letters, is exercised in spelling, and from lesson to lesson, until perfected in the use of letters; and as the

living child, when sufficiently nurtured on milk, should be fed on stronger food until he is able to digest the strongest meat, so these Hebrew saints, in the a, b, c of their religious instruction, under the law as their schoolmaster, had learned that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins; and as they had been accustomed to offer their sacrifices for sin year by year continually, because the law could make nothing perfect, so they seemed to still cling to the impression that under the gospel new foundations of faith and repentance would still require to be made, and they were dull to comprehend the absolute perfection of the mediatorial work of our High Priest, who by one offering has perfected forever them that are sanctified. The foundation of our faith and repentance, and of eternal salvation, is permanently laid, and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." And in demonstration of this plain position he argues the impossibility of any new foundation for salvation; for to lay another foundation would require that Christ should come again in the flesh, be crucified again on the cross, and so put to open shame. Having once assayed to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and cried on the cross, "It is finished," and ascended in triumph to the skies, believing that he had forever saved his people from their sins, if it should prove possible that his mediatorial work had failed to accomplish what he intended and designed, and he had to come back and do his work over again, this would be a blemish that would put him to an open shame. But observe, the apostle does not intimate that it is possible either for the saints to fall from this foundation already laid, or that it is possible that any new foundation should be laid, but he says, "It is impossible," "if they [the saints] shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance." And to prove the impossibility shows that it would require what is altogether impossible, namely, that Christ should again be crucified, and so put to an open shame. Some, in commenting on this text, have supposed that Paul intended

to convey the idea that there was a liability that some of those described may fall away, in order to harmonize their understanding of it with the certain preservation of all the saints in grace to glory, have assumed the position that persons may experience all these things and only be "almost Christians;" but if there be a saint on earth who has any further or additional evidence, we never met with him. Beside the absurdity of being almost a child of God, almost born of God, almost begotten of God; a child of the devil, though almost a child of God; they find no such logic in the Bible. Let us examine these evidences, and if any who read this on examination shall find that they have additional or more reliable evidences, we desire that they will immediately inform us.

"Those who were once enlightened." Are the dead enlightened in regard to spiritual things? tell us, ye that were sometimes darkness. We read that, In him, Christ, was life, and the life was the light of men. Hence light and life are synonymous terms, as used in the text. Those who were once enlightened are those who once were quickened by the light of life and immortality, while all others are held in chains of darkness, having eyes, but see not. The only way in which a sinner can be spiritually enlightened is this: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."

"And have tasted of the heavenly gift." Christ is the heavenly gift; he is the true bread which God has given for the life of the world; he that eateth of this bread hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Is it possible for any to partake of the Holy Ghost who are not born of the

Spirit? Is there any other way possible for men to partake of the Holy Ghost? “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” Can we then partake of the Holy Ghost, partake of the divine nature, and not be quickened by it? Is not this partaking of the Holy Ghost the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father? Does not this Spirit seal all the children of God as such, and bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? Are not as many as are led by the Spirit of God the sons of God?

“And have tasted the good word of God.” “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” “To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” Has any sinner ever tasted the good word of God without being quickened by it? Never.

“And the power of the world to come.” A foretaste of heaven, the earnest of an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Without being born again we cannot have the faith of the Son of God; without that faith no man can enter within the veil or taste of the power of the world to come. Paul had a taste when he was caught up to the third heaven, but whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell.

Now if all these do not constitute reliable evidence that they who have experienced them are the children of God, tell us, ye who know, what more is required? Well, having these indisputable evidences that ye are the children of God, if it were possible that you should lose all this, do you know of anything else that could save you, without involving the preposterous idea that Christ should come again in the flesh, and suffer again, and do all the work of redemption over again? Then the absurd doctrine that sinners can pass from

death to life, have all these evidences of a gracious state, fall away, or fall from grace, as it is called, and then get religion again, or be restored to a gracious state, is what this text declares to be simply impossible, and that impossibility he proves by the fact that it would require a second Christ, a second crucifixion, a second redemption, all of which would tarnish the unsullied glory of Christ and put him to an open shame. Arminians may fall from works for want of grace, but for saints to fall from grace for want of works is impossible.

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 365 – 369

HEBREWS 6:4-6

“For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.”

The inspired writer of this text had been discoursing on the subject of a progression in the knowledge of divine things in the school of Christ, and under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, through the gifts bestowed upon the church; but he found some of the Hebrew saints who had been so long under Moses as a schoolmaster that they were exceedingly dull to comprehend the perfection of the gospel, for the old schoolmaster, the law, made nothing perfect. Like the pupil in school always studying the alphabet, dwelling on the form and sound of the letters, but never instructed in combining them to spell words or to express sentences, or like children accustomed to be fed on milk, but never having their senses exercised to use meat. The principles or elements of the perfection of the gospel of Christ, such as repentance from dead works, faith toward God, the doctrine of baptism, and of laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, all these had been set forth in the types of the law and predictions of the prophets, but as the types were only shadows of good things to come, the body or substance being Christ, as set forth in the gospel, therefore he says, leaving the principles of the doctrine which were in the types, as the first rudiments or first lessons given, Let us go on to perfection; like the child in school who, after learning his letters, is exercised in spelling, and from lesson to lesson, until perfected in the use of letters; and as the

living child, when sufficiently nurtured on milk, should be fed on stronger food until he is able to digest the strongest meat, so these Hebrew saints, in the a, b, c of their religious instruction, under the law as their schoolmaster, had learned that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins; and as they had been accustomed to offer their sacrifices for sin year by year continually, because the law could make nothing perfect, so they seemed to still cling to the impression that under the gospel new foundations of faith and repentance would still require to be made, and they were dull to comprehend the absolute perfection of the mediatorial work of our High Priest, who by one offering has perfected forever them that are sanctified. The foundation of our faith and repentance, and of eternal salvation, is permanently laid, and "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus." And in demonstration of this plain position he argues the impossibility of any new foundation for salvation; for to lay another foundation would require that Christ should come again in the flesh, be crucified again on the cross, and so put to open shame. Having once assayed to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and cried on the cross, "It is finished," and ascended in triumph to the skies, believing that he had forever saved his people from their sins, if it should prove possible that his mediatorial work had failed to accomplish what he intended and designed, and he had to come back and do his work over again, this would be a blemish that would put him to an open shame. But observe, the apostle does not intimate that it is possible either for the saints to fall from this foundation already laid, or that it is possible that any new foundation should be laid, but he says, "It is impossible," "if they [the saints] shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance." And to prove the impossibility shows that it would require what is altogether impossible, namely, that Christ should again be crucified, and so put to an open shame. Some, in commenting on this text, have supposed that Paul intended

to convey the idea that there was a liability that some of those described may fall away, in order to harmonize their understanding of it with the certain preservation of all the saints in grace to glory, have assumed the position that persons may experience all these things and only be "almost Christians;" but if there be a saint on earth who has any further or additional evidence, we never met with him. Beside the absurdity of being almost a child of God, almost born of God, almost begotten of God; a child of the devil, though almost a child of God; they find no such logic in the Bible. Let us examine these evidences, and if any who read this on examination shall find that they have additional or more reliable evidences, we desire that they will immediately inform us.

"Those who were once enlightened." Are the dead enlightened in regard to spiritual things? tell us, ye that were sometimes darkness. We read that, In him, Christ, was life, and the life was the light of men. Hence light and life are synonymous terms, as used in the text. Those who were once enlightened are those who once were quickened by the light of life and immortality, while all others are held in chains of darkness, having eyes, but see not. The only way in which a sinner can be spiritually enlightened is this: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ."

"And have tasted of the heavenly gift." Christ is the heavenly gift; he is the true bread which God has given for the life of the world; he that eateth of this bread hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Is it possible for any to partake of the Holy Ghost who are not born of the

Spirit? Is there any other way possible for men to partake of the Holy Ghost? “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” Can we then partake of the Holy Ghost, partake of the divine nature, and not be quickened by it? Is not this partaking of the Holy Ghost the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father? Does not this Spirit seal all the children of God as such, and bear witness with our spirit that we are the children of God? Are not as many as are led by the Spirit of God the sons of God?

“And have tasted the good word of God.” “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” “To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” Has any sinner ever tasted the good word of God without being quickened by it? Never.

“And the power of the world to come.” A foretaste of heaven, the earnest of an inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Without being born again we cannot have the faith of the Son of God; without that faith no man can enter within the veil or taste of the power of the world to come. Paul had a taste when he was caught up to the third heaven, but whether he was in the body or out of the body he could not tell.

Now if all these do not constitute reliable evidence that they who have experienced them are the children of God, tell us, ye who know, what more is required? Well, having these indisputable evidences that ye are the children of God, if it were possible that you should lose all this, do you know of anything else that could save you, without involving the preposterous idea that Christ should come again in the flesh, and suffer again, and do all the work of redemption over again? Then the absurd doctrine that sinners can pass from

death to life, have all these evidences of a gracious state, fall away, or fall from grace, as it is called, and then get religion again, or be restored to a gracious state, is what this text declares to be simply impossible, and that impossibility he proves by the fact that it would require a second Christ, a second crucifixion, a second redemption, all of which would tarnish the unsullied glory of Christ and put him to an open shame. Arminians may fall from works for want of grace, but for saints to fall from grace for want of works is impossible.

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 365 – 369

HEBREWS 6:4-6.

Elder Beebe: If it is not asking too much, please give your views on Hebrews 6:4-6, and oblige yours truly,

I. D. Irwin. Tecumseh, Neb.
July 26, 1867.

Reply: - We have on several occasions published our views elaborately on the text proposed, namely: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

Those Hebrew, or Jewish disciples had been brought up under the ceremonial law, the priesthood of which allowed, and required for every new offence, that the offender should lay a new foundation for repentance and reinstatement in the congregation of Israel. For which cause their priests had to officiate continually at the altar; for being ceremonially purged from their defilement only served until they again became defiled. These disciples had shown a strong disposition to adhere to those abrogated rites, supposing that as it had been under the law, so it continued to be under the gospel, that new sacrifices must be made to lay a new foundation for repentance for every new transgression; not comprehending that Christ, our High Priest, has "by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified." That this offering of himself, being once made could never be made again, without again crucifying the Son of God and putting him to an open shame. Hence, "It is impossible." What is impossible? It is impossible for the children of God, who by

virtue of the one offering of the Son of God, have been once purged from their sins, and brought into the enjoyment of all the marks and evidences of their acceptance with God, by the strongest and most unequivocal, and unmistakable evidences that the children of God ever had, or ever can have while in the flesh, it is impossible for them to fall away from this foundation and be renewed again.

The glory of our High Priest shone in refulgent splendor. When being made perfect he became the author of *eternal salvation* unto all that obey him. (See Hebrews 5:9.) And in comparing and contrasting the two priesthoods, the apostle says, after speaking of the inefficiency of the offerings and service of the Levitical priesthood, "But Christ being come a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:11-14)?" It is therefore impossible that any who are redeemed to God by the one offering of Christ, if this should fail them, if they shall fall away from this foundation, to renew, or replace them, or again redeem them, as it would require that Christ should again be crucified, and all the glory and triumph of the offering which he has once made would be lost, and he put to open shame. For if those once purged and redeemed by him could ever require to be redeemed again, it would sink his glory down at least to a level with that of the Levitical priesthood.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 66 – 67

HEBREWS VI. 4-6; JUDE 6.

(Reply to Sister Mary Poston.)

Before we notice the passages on which our sister has asked our views, we will attend to a previous request in her letter, in which she has desired us to instruct her, and teach her the way. From the distinct manner in which the Lord has enabled her to pronounce the Shibboleth, we have unquestionable assurance that she is a pupil in the school of Christ, and a class-mate of those of whom it is written, "And thy people shall all be taught of the Lord," and of whom the blessed Redeemer has said, "Every one therefore which has heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me;" and again, "And he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Taught of God, she knows that Jesus Christ himself is the Way: no man cometh unto the Father but by him. As Jesus said to the disciples, "And wither I go, ye know, and the way ye know." But if our sister desires, in the language of the spouse, to inquire, "Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon: for why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" perhaps the best response will be found in the next verse, (see Cant. i. 7, 8).

The text in Hebrews vi. 4-6, is urged by the inspired writer as a reason why the saints should leave the shadows of the old covenant, which could make nothing perfect, and go on to perfection, which is found in the new covenant, or gospel kingdom, wherein dwelleth righteousness: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection from the dead, &c. Under the old covenant, when offerings were made for sins, there was a remembrance again made of sins, every year, and new

offerings were required from time to time, under the Levitical priesthood, but now, under the superior priesthood of Christ, the one offering which he has made, presents the only foundation for the doctrine and institutions of the gospel. Instead therefore of our attempting to lay a new foundation, we are to remember, that other foundations can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, for should this one atonement which he has made, fail us, we would be hopelessly, and forever lost. “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted he good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance,” &c. That is if those who have passed from death unto life, who are born of God, and are led by the Spirit, in all the experience of the saints, if they, if christians, should fall away from their interest in the blood of Christ, no blood of beasts, offered on Jewish altars, could reclaim them, or afford for them a foundation for repentance, or faith, for they were but figures in the first place, and now even as types of good things to come, they are abolished, and to renew one for whom Christ has died and arisen from the dead, again to repentance, if it were possible they could lose that interest, or fall away from that foundation, would require that to be done which it is impossible ever to be done, namely, the crucifixion of Christ again.

There was in the first place no other way for the sinner to be justified before God, only that which is through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and if he has died for any of us, redeemed us from all sin, and freely justified us from all things, and as an evidence of having done all this for us, he has quickened us, and enlightened us, made us partakers of Christ, who is the heavenly gift, and made us partakers of the Holy Ghost, fed us on the good word of God, which is of itself both spirit and life, and given us a foretaste of heaven,

now if it were possible that a saint should lose his interest in all this, would he not, in order to be saved, require the same display of matchless power and grace, as in the first instance? If in the first there was nothing short of the blood of Christ that could cleanse him from sin, nothing short of the crucifixion of Christ could satisfy for him the penal demand of the law, could anything less than the crucifixion of Christ again, the shedding of his blood anew, and the whole work of redemption again performed, renew him, or restore to him what Christ's one offering had done for him?

The impossibility then of saints falling from grace, and being restored again to a gracious state, is perfectly absurd. And the inspired writer in this text, instead of representing that a saint can or may so fall, and be again renewed, most emphatically declares that it is impossible, and as reason why he declares it is impossible, he shows that it would require that Christ should again suffer and be put to open shame, and that can never again be done. And the holy Apostle says, in verse ninth of the same chapter, "But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.

"Better things." - Better things than what? Better things than they should fall away from the foundation on which God has built them. And why was he thus persuaded? Because, "When God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for

refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Well might these considerations persuade the apostle better things of the saints than that they could ever fall away from Christ, their foundation, for before they can fall, the two immutable things wherein it is impossible for God to lie, must both change and fail; the promise and oath of God, must fail, the strong consolation given to heirs of promise, must fail; the hope which they have as an anchor to the soul, must cease to be either sure or steadfast, and the everlasting priesthood of Christ must also fail, for these are the things which accompany salvation. But some have supposed that our text describes an almost christian. Such a thing as an almost christian never existed either in heaven or earth. We are either christians or we are not. We are either dead in sins, or quickened together with Christ; we are either born again, or we are not born again; we love God or we hate him; there is no middle ground or intermediate place. Those who were once enlightened, are made alive from the dead; for "in him [Christ] was life, and the life was the light of men." Therefore until quickened by immortal life in Jesus Christ, we are under the power of darkness, and it is impossible to see the kingdom of God, or the things of his Spirit, until we are born again. Christ is the heavenly gift; he is the unspeakable gift of God, for God has given him to be head over all things to his church. The gift of God is eternal life, and John says of Christ, "This is the true God, and eternal life." And Christ says they that eat his flesh and drink his blood, or who eat of him as the bread that came down from heaven, shall never die. None but saints are partakers of the Holy Ghost. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him,

neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Again, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." But all men have not the Spirit of God. When the promise of the Holy Ghost was made to the saints, it was in these words, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."

"And have tasted the good word of God." Christ says, "The words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "Being born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of an incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Can any but God's children taste of that word? Certainly not; neither can any others taste of the powers of the world to come. If there are now living on the earth any who have any other evidences, over and above those stated in our text, we have never met with them, and the Scriptures, unless we have sadly misread them, point out no other or stronger evidences of being in a gracious state. Let us, while we rejoice then that our God has made it as impossible that these shall fall away, as it is that Christ should be crucified afresh and put to an open shame, take heed to the admonition, to leave the rites and legal ceremonies of the old covenant, in which were embodied the principles, elementary parts, or first lessons, the types and shadows of good things which were to come, but which have now come, and go on to perfection, for the law made nothing perfect, but Christ in the gospel, or new covenant has, as our High Priest, by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified.

We would be glad to help the mind of sister Poston on the text in Jude; but have only room here to say that we

understand the angels here spoken of, to be the same of whom Peter speaks in 2 Peter ii. 1-4, as false prophets or teachers, who are represented in Revelations xii., as forming the train of the great red dragon, and who made war with Michael, and prevailed not, but were displaced from the church, and cast out into the earth; these are held under chains of darkness. God has hidden from them the things of his Spirit, and though they attempt to make a science of divinity, and may be ever learning, yet shall they never be able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Middletown, N.Y.
October 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 36 - 40

HEBREWS VII.

We have frequently been called on for our views on the subject of Melchisedec, and have published such views as we have on the subject, but as the file of our papers are not accessible to all our readers, we will remark that we do not understand the inspired writer, in Hebrews vii., to be speaking of Melchisedec as a man, but as a type of Christ, both as King of Salem (or peace); and as Priest unto the most high God. Uniting in one person the two offices of king and priest. Melchisedec, as a type, supplies what Aaron in his priesthood failed to show of the royal priesthood of the Son of God. The priesthood of Aaron was hereditary, it was vested in Levi, with whom according to the prophetic blessing, the Thummim and Urim was established. As a son of Levi, who had paid tithes when in the loins of Abraham, to Melchisedec, he received the priesthood, and transmitted it to his descendants, and it passed down from sire to son, until it expired by its own limitation. But of Melchisedec no lineage is reckoned; nothing being said of him, as to who was his father and mother. As a man we have to doubt he had both father and mother, like all other men, but as a priest he had neither, for his descent is not counted. His priesthood was immediately from God, and not to be transmitted to posterity.

All that is presented in the type is that Melchisedec met Abraham when returning from the slaughter of the kings, and that Abraham gave him a tenth part of the spoils of his spoils of his victory, and that Melchisedec blessed Abraham. We are also informed that this Melchisedec was king of Salem, or king of righteousness, as the type signifies, and at the same time he was priest unto God, but not after the order of Aaron, of an order which recognized no descent, no predecessor or successor. As a type he was made like unto

the Son of God, that is, as we understand it, the account given of Melchisedec embraced just enough, and no more than enough, to set forth the peculiar order of the priesthood of Christ, in distinction from the order of the Levitical priesthood. The type was made like unto, or made to resemble and clearly to set forth its antitype, as now presented in the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. In this type no descent or date is given, that he might more clearly typify Christ, whose goings forth are of old, from everlasting, and whose kingdom and priesthood shall have no end. As it is written, The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. Not made or constituted a priest after the law of a carnal commandment like the sons of Levi, but with an oath and by the power of an endless life, by the which power he is able also to save them unto the uttermost who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

Middletown, N.Y.,
April 15, 1859

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 215 – 216

HEBREWS 7:25

Eld. G. Beebe: - I would like to have you write something, if you think it best, on Heb. 7:25, especially on the last clause, "Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Yours respectfully.
Silas H. Durand.
Wilkesbarre, Pa.
Feb. 23, 1864.

Reply: - The great theme of the inspired writer of this epistle was to set forth the Mediatorial glory of the Son of God, in the complete salvation of his people, especially the immortality of his priesthood. Although typffied by the Levitical priesthood, he was not a priest of the order or lineage of Aaron, but of the order of Melchisedec. In comparing and contrasting the two orders, he shows that the one was but a dim shadow of the other. And perhaps no point of difference is more prominently presented than that of the mortality of the one and the immortality of the other. Aaron and his sons, without an oath, were made priests by the law of a carnal commandment: that is by the Levitical law, which was given to the carnal Hebrews, or fleshly descendants of Abraham, regarding them in the flesh, as mortal; and soon to pass away. The ceremonial law was also limited, and to pass away with the generations of Israel in the flesh; and the priesthood to agree with the carnal, transient and dying sons of Jacob, was by the law of a carnal commandment, involving perpetual changes in the priesthood; none of the priests of that order could continue long in the office by reason of death; for in it men were made priests who had infirmities in common with the rest of mankind, - were like all others, subject to disease and death. But the great High Priest of our profession was not made a priest after the law of a carnal

commandment, but after the power of an endless life. For the priests under the law were made without an oath; but this with an oath by him that said unto him, The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. And they, truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue, by reason of death; but this man, (Christ) because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. The perfect and everlasting salvation of all who come unto him, rests upon the efficiency of his priesthood based upon the power of his immortality, or endless life. If he were not the life, the endless or eternal life of his people, there could be no vital relationship to give character and efficiency to his standing as the "High Priest of our profession." If the relation he bore to those for whom he officiated at the alter, were only that which resulted from his being made of a woman, or his assumption of our nature, taking on him the seed of Abraham, and being found in fashion as a man; the law of a carnal or fleshly commandment would have been sufficient; but then his priesthood could do no more than that of Aaron or his sons. This would involve the unscriptural idea that his priestly office did not exist until his incarnation. How then could it be after the order of Melchisedec, which type signifies a priesthood that is without beginning of days or end of life? To qualify him with the power of an endless life:...a life which is without beginning of days, or end of duration, that life must be eternal, self-existent, and self-sustaining. Such a life Christ has as the Son of God: it is the life of God himself, and is therefore from everlasting to everlasting. "Who is the blessed and only Potentate; the King of kings, and Lord of lords: who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting, Amen." By

this power of immortality he is able to vanquish death and him that had the power of death, and to deliver his people from wrath, raise them up to heavenly places in himself. Through this "Eternal Spirit," or life of God, he offered himself, as our abiding High Priest, without spot unto God, and "By one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified." The body in which he suffered and died on the cross was not permitted to see corruption: it was raised up by the power of his endless life, quickened with his own immortality; death hath no more dominion over it. Thus in that resurrected body he has passed into the heavens; angels and all holy beings are in subjection to him. But the power of the endless life of his Priesthood is most gloriously displayed also in his Intercession for his people. We do not, however, understand, as many represent, that as our High Priest, his Intercession consists in his standing literally in the courts of his eternal Father, pleading, and endeavoring to overcome some supposed reluctance on the part of the Father, to procure blessings for us; for as a Priest his work was to do the will of the Father, and to finish the work. There is perfect harmony in the priesthood and the immutable will of God. But by the power of the immortality of his priesthood, he by the eternal spirit of life is the vitality of all his members, and by the power of his endless life he dwells in all his quickened children, and in their hearts indites and carries on his intercession. Ever living, not only for them, but living in them, by this spirit and power of immortality, helping their infirmities he maketh intercession for and in them, according to the will of God, and with groanings that they cannot utter.

We find one of this intercession flowing from our hearts, directed by the light or power of our mortal life. We may have been taught from infancy to say our prayers; and like the Pharisee, pray with ourselves; but we could not draw near unto God, nor find access to the throne of grace until

this power of endless life was manifested in us. When by the new and spiritual birth we passed from death into this endless life; when Christ, who is our life was revealed in us, that moment his intercession, by the power and vitality of that life, in us began to be experimentally developed. A hidden secret groaning of the quickened child, was struggling for adequate language, “Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner.” “What shall I do to be saved?” “Save Lord, I perish.” This intercession is by the power of an endless life; there is vitality and immortality in it. And the power of endless life which makes the quickened, heaven-born sinner cry to God for mercy and grace, is the same power which has delivered him from death, and formed Christ in him, the hope of glory. This life, which is not only from Christ, but which is Christ, makes intercession for us. Not only when in our first or early experience, we were made to stand in our experience, guilty, wretched, bankrupt and utterly ruined before the bar of our Eternal Judge; when the begotten intercession of our heart struggled for birth; but throughout our whole experience, we find that we can have no access to the throne of grace, nor draw nigh unto God with a true heart and full assurance of faith, only as we are moved by this power of the endless life of our great High Priest. “No man can come unto the Father but by me.” When our carnal passions prevail, and in the most solemn forms, we give expression to the fleshly desires of the natural mind, “We ask and we receive not; because we ask amiss.” God in great mercy rejects such graceless, heartless, lifeless prayers. But when the spirit of Christ which dwells in all his children, directs us to the throne of grace; we find access through him who is our life, and are made partakers of the power of his endless life; and then we find our nature with all its boasted wisdom and eloquence cannot supply language to adequately utter the heaven inspired intercession which the endless life of Christ awakens in our hearts.

The holy anointing by which Aaron in the type was made a priest, was poured upon the head, even Aaron's head, and ran down his beard, and descended to the skirts of his garment; so Christ our Priest, is consecrated as our Priest, by the Spirit of the Lord God which is upon him, with all the power of his endless life, and the holy unction through him as our spiritual head, descends to the hem of his garment, which covers his mystical body, for we are told (Rev. 1:13) that his priestly garment clothed his body, down to the foot; and therefore an inspired witness testifies, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One," (Christ) "and ye know all things." "But the anointing which ye have received abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no life, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (I John 2:20 & 27)

Thus in the unity and identity of Christ, our Great High Priest, and his church as his body, and the fullness of him who filleth all in all, his members are all made kings and priests, unto him, and they shall reign with him in glory.

In this vital and endless unction, the prayers and intercessions for the saints, in the spirit emanating from the power of his endless life, identify them with him in the priesthood; not as successors, as the sons of Aaron were to him; but as his members identified and constituting his priestly body; quickened and animated by the power of the same endless life, are *in him* a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people. In this union and life being made priests unto God, the prayers and intercession of the saints are offered up upon the golden altar which John saw before the throne. (Rev. 8:3)

In conclusion, He is able to save them unto the uttermost, who come unto God by him. The ability of his priesthood, as

we have seen, is in the power of his endless, or immortal, self-existing, independent and eternal life. All who are made partakers of this life, are saved by its power. The specialty of the Priesthood is restricted to the extent of this life. None but our "Blessed Potentate" hath it. No man or human power can approach it, or even see it; but it is through him bestowed on all the members of his body. "I give unto them eternal life." (John 10:28) "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John 6:37) These scriptures show very clearly who they are that come unto the Father by Christ, and our text declares his ability, by the power of an endless life, to save *them* unto the uttermost. Not partially, but fully, completely. And he is as willing as he is able. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou has given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24) This is the extent of the Priesthood of Christ; it embraces all whom the Father has given him, and no more; and they are saved unto the uttermost, by the power of his endless life which they are partakers of, and by which they come unto the Father; while all who are laboring to approach the Father by their own works, or relying on any thing else for salvation, are not manifestly of his priesthood. His Priesthood is specially and exclusively for them who come unto God by him. For them, and only for them does he abide a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec; for them, and in them, he by the spirit and power of endless, eternal life, makes intercession - as the High Priest of their profession. Truly such an High Priest becomes us. Then let us duly consider the apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. (Heb. 3:1)

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 470 – 475

HEBREWS VII. 28.

"For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore."

This whole epistle appears to be devoted to an exhibition of the mediatorial relations which our Redeemer bears to his Father and his church, prominent among which his priesthood is the peculiar theme of the inspired writer. The epistle begins with the testimony of his sonship, and as the medium of divine revelation to the saints on earth, God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and by whom also he made the worlds. Who being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, &c. The Son of God thus identified, is next presented in the perfect work of purging our sins, and then sitting down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. In purging our sins, his priestly office is involved, and a comparison of him with angels and with the priests of the Levitical order, by way of contrast, is instituted; wherein his unexampled pedigree, the higher order of his priesthood, and the superiority of the testament of which he is the surety, are brought to view. The disparity between the order of Aaron's priesthood, and that of Melchisedec, is very clearly and strikingly demonstrated by several qualifications which Christ possessed over those possessed by Aaron and his sons, among which is that found in our text, namely, the oath, by which the perpetuity and immutability of his priesthood are established.

The law maketh men high priests which have infirmity. That is, the law to which the Levitical priesthood belonged, for Aaron and his sons had infirmities, were liable to diseases,

like other men, and could not long fill the office by reason of death, yet the law expressly made these men high priests, and allowed no other men to hold the office. Hence we are told that there being a change of the priesthood, there must of necessity be also a change of the law. The law could not recognize any but Levites, and it is evident that our Lord sprung out of Judea, of which tribe Moses (or the law,) spake nothing concerning the priesthood. The law under which Aaron was made a priest is called the law of a carnal commandment; that is, it had reference to the fleshy persons, descent, physical and mental properties of those who were to hold the office. If a son of Aaron was blemished in his person, or unsound physically, he was disqualified, because the Levitical law and priesthood regarded the commonwealth of Israel as the fleshly descendants of Abraham. But Christ is not made a priest after the law, but by the power of an endless life. And there was verily a disannulling of the law going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God. The inspired writer having thus explained the distinction between the covenants, or testaments, or laws, goes on to speak of the oath which was required in the priestly office of Christ, as another essential difference between the two priesthoods and laws, and in doing so, makes use of the words of our text, before summing up the arguments.

In the foregoing references to the testimony, we see that the men which were made high priests by the law, all had infirmities, and had first to offer sacrifices for their own sins, and then for the people’s; and such was their infirmity they could not continue in the office by reason of death. *But the word of the oath which was since the law, maketh the Son who is consecrated for evermore.* The word of the oath is quoted in the twenty-first verse of this chapter, from Psalm

cx. 4, “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent. Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.”

The word of this oath *was since the law.* Not that the word was not spoken, or the oath taken until after the legal dispensation expired, for the law and the prophets were until John, but the inspired psalmist declares that it was in the past tense in his days, more than fifteen hundred years before the days of John the Baptist. And we understand that Christ, as signified by the peculiar order of his priesthood, was a Priest, without predecessor or successor, without descent, without father or mother, in the priesthood, and without beginning of days or end of life. Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec, was the word of the oath, and that order is expressly defined as signifying that his priesthood was without beginning or end, and after the power of immortality. So long then as Jesus has embodied in himself the immortality of his body and members, as their mediatorial Head and Life, the words of the oath by which he is made priest have been in force. But his appearance now in the end of the world to officiate in the priestly office, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, was in the order of time, subsequently to the priesthood of Aaron. In the same sense in which he is called the *second* Adam. Not that Adam existed before him in reality, for before the dust of the world, out of which Adam was formed, was made, Christ existed in his mediatorial relation to his body and members, as one brought up with the Father. In manifestation to us, Christ was the second Adam, while as the Lord from heaven, his goings forth were of old, from everlasting; so in the order of divine revelation, the types preceded their antitypes, the shadows, their substance. The word of the oath, “Thou art a Priest,” not thou shalt be a Priest, the word of the oath is in the perfect tense, but this word of the oath by which he is made a Priest, involved the necessity of his advent to the world, and of his being made under the law to redeem them that

were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Moreover, the word of the oath consecrated him as the High Priest for evermore, and thus secures the perpetuity of his priesthood. He is not to be removed by infirmity, by death, or anything else. He is not to be superceded by any other priests or priesthoods, sacrifices or sufferings, but to represent his people as their only dependence for acceptance before God for evermore.

In the summing up of what had been said, the amount of testimony is thus given: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched and not man" who has by so much obtained a more excellent ministry, than that under the Old Covenant or Testament; by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. The superior excellency of the new covenant over the old is to be estimated by the superiority of the priesthood of Christ over that of Aaron. The better promises are those which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began, and which is confirmed by oath. An oath for confirmation with men is an end of all strife, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, by which it is impossible that God should lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us, which hope we have, as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an High Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.

Well might the inspired penman assure us that "Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." And also

that he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. One who is easily touched with the feelings of our infirmities, having been tempted in all points as we are, and yet without sin. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 444 - 447

HEBREWS 9:27

Brother Beebe: If not too much trouble, I would like to read your views on Hebrews 9:27. If death is the penalty of the law, how could it precede judgment? This may seem to show weakness in me, which I know is so, but please excuse.

Yours in bonds of love,
John Nosler.
Wintersett, Iowa, Oct. 27, 1861.

REPLY: The text reads thus: "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." The sentence is not perfect without the next verse, as follows: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."

If we consider the general mortality of the human family to be here intended, we should understand the demise or death of our earthly bodies, which is clearly an appointment of God. As he said to man, "For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And again: "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Regarding the execution of this sentence, as the penalty of the law of God, here was clearly a judgment preceding the execution of the penalty. And Paul says, Rom. 5:17, 18, "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. Therefore, as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Thus we see that the infliction of death is the execution of judgment, and this judgment by the stern decree of God has become an appointment, extending to men, and to all men, as death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. This judgment however passed on all men from the date of the first

transgression, “In the day,” he ate of the forbidden fruit. But the Scriptures speak *of a judgment to come.* By which however we do not understand that God has not already adjudicated the case of all the human family, and fixed their everlasting destiny, for he is of one mind, and none can turn him. But the term judgment, in its scriptural sense, as relating to God’s judgments, means the execution of the penalties of his law. Hence we read, He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him; and of some at least it is written, ‘Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” Hence when the inspired writers speak of a judgment that shall take place after the death of our mortal bodies, we understand the execution of the righteous decrees of the eternal Judge, even as the decree of God now stands and hath forever stood. We cannot, without disparaging thoughts of God, suppose him less capable to adjudicate the state of all men before the world began, than he will be when the world shall be no more. Can we conceive that he has learned anything that he did not always know; how then could he declare the end from the beginning, which he says he has done? Nor could there possibly be any less of equity, righteousness, or purity in his decisions maturely existing in his mind before, than subsequently to the existence of this world.

Paul speaks of an appointed day, when God will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath appointed; but he also tells us that this judgment shall be according to my gospel. Not on some new plan, law, or the development of something new to him. The judgment of all, both saints and sinners, is recorded in the Scriptures, just as it shall be executed. The wicked shall receive the judgment now in store for them, when God shall turn them into hell with the nations which know him not, and the saints shall also receive the judgments or what God has already decreed

for them, when they shall be raised up from the dead in incorruption to be forever with the Lord.

But although we have thus written our views on the subject of the final judgment of the last day, we cannot understand the text proposed by our brother to be treating on the subject. The whole connection shows the inspired writer engaged in illustrating the Mediatorial work of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, and in regard to how he was once offered to bear the sins of many. Now if brother Nosier will observe the figure used in the tenth and eleventh verses of this chapter, he will, if we mistake not, find the key to this text. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." The law of testaments then in requiring the testator's death to give validity to the will, recognizes the appointment unto men once to die, and once dying is sufficient to make his will or testament perfectly valid. So Christ was once offered, not as Moses required the frequent offering of sacrifices, and shedding of blood under the Levitical priesthood, but he was once offered to bear the sins of many. How? As it is appointed unto men once to die, in order that their testament shall have force. Well, when a man has made his last will and testament, the document remains without strength until he, the testator, is dead. Then the testament is brought into the proper court for judgment, and upon the establishment of the facts which prove first that this is the last will and testament of the testator, and that the testator is dead, judgment is legally pronounced, the testament is judged, recognized and comes in full force. So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. Justice and law received the offering, and acknowledge the force and validity of the will, and therefore the heirs identified in his testament look for the complete execution of the will of the testator.

And as the will of the testator in this testament was to bear the sins of many, and to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, this will is established beyond all controversy, and therefore to the saints, for none others are looking for him to appear in the glory of his resurrection, and triumph over death, hell and sin, nor do they look in vain, for unto them he shall appear the second time, but not with all our sins laying upon him, and law and justice still demanding the payment, for having put away sin, and all the sins which he bore, and all the iniquities of his people which were laid on him, he shall appear without sin, unto salvation. He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. He has the keys of death and hell. To them who look for him he shall appear, it cannot be otherwise, and they shall see him as he is, holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens; and what is more wonderful, is that when he shall appear, they shall be like him, for whom Jehovah did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. The enraptured psalmist could sing, and so can all who are looking for him, and who love his appearing, "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

"O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God;
And flesh and sense no more control
The rising pleasures of my soul.

My flesh shall slumber in the ground,
'Till the last trumpet's joyful sound,
Then burst her bands in sweet surprise,
And in my Savior's image rise."

Middletown, N.Y.,
November 1,1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 72 – 75

HEBREWS X. 26.

We understand that this admonition, like that in Hebrews vi. 4-6, was addressed to the saints, which were recognized by the inspired writer of the epistle, as “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling.” As he had told them in chapter sixth, that if they should fall away, it would be impossible to renew them again to repentance, according to the manner of the Levitical priesthood, seeing that such a renewal would require Christ to be again sacrificed, so he tells them again in this text, “There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins.” When the priest under the law made atonement for the children of Israel, and the Israelites again sinned, there remained farther sacrifices for their sins; the sacrifice was to be repeated continually; but Christ has made one offering for sin, and but one, and there remains no more. But to the professed disciple of Christ, who has sinned willfully, after that he has received a knowledge of the truth, there remains a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour - what, the saints? No, the saints can never be devoured, for Christ has by one offering perfected them forever, and he has given his word for it, “They shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” What then shall be devoured by the “judgment and fiery indignation,” which the willful offender is fearfully looking for? “The adversaries.” The adversaries of the cause of God and truth shall truly be devoured; but says the apostle, “We are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.” And again, in the close of this chapter, he says, “But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” If a professed disciple of Christ, willfully transgresses the laws of the kingdom, is it strange that he should fear that he is only an adversary? and even if he is not, he feels afraid

that he is, and looks for that judgment which awaits the adversaries.

This whole subject is an admonition to the saints. Moses' law could not be transgressed by an Israelite with impunity. The offender died without mercy, for the law of Moses knew no mercy for its transgressors. But as Moses was but a servant, and Christ is a Son over his own house, the offender who hath dishonored Christ, trodden underfoot the Son of God, by despising his law, counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace, he hath committed far greater offense, and is worthy of a sorer punishment, and *if* judged by the law of Moses, would be subjected to a sorer punishment. But he is, if a christian, under law to Christ, and a copy of that law is written in his heart, and it reads thus, notwithstanding the offender's deserts, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." It is certain, however, that he will visit their transgression with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes, and they shall know that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

May we listen to the admonition of our subject, and may God grant us grace whereby we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire.

Middletown, N. Y.
Nov. 1, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 258 – 259

HEBREWS 10:26-29.

Remarks on Hebrews 10:26-29.
By request of brother Hugh Johnson,
Middlesex Co., Ontario.

"For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

The great theme of the inspired writer of this epistle is to show, by comparing and contrasting the two covenants, the superiority of the latter, or gospel, over the former, or legal. The former, with its law of carnal commandments, its worldly sanctuary, and divine service, could make nothing perfect, was weak through the flesh; its ample variety of types, though strikingly analogous, were not the perfect images of the things to which they pointed. The priesthood of Aaron, his service at the altar, and the perpetual offerings of the people through him, failed to purge their conscience from dead works, or to qualify them to worship the true God. Moses, their leader, and minister of the law, though faithful in all his house, as a servant, did not, and could not occupy it in the relation, dignity, nor inheritance of a son. The law which that covenant imposed on the tribes of Jacob, though holy, just and good, was a ministration of death, and could give them no life, because they were carnal, sold under sin. If it could by any possibility have given life, then verily

righteousness should have been by the law. All who were, and as many as now are of the works of the law, are under the curse.

The blood of the victims which flowed continually from the altars, though ceremonially cleansing the transgressors, and showing that without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins, was but a ceremonial purging; for in them all, there was a remembrance again made of sins every year; for it is not possible that the blood of bulls, and of goats, should take away sins. "The Holy Ghost, thus signifying, that the way into the holiest of all [the gospel] was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle [or legal covenant] was yet standing; which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and diverse washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come, a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building." That is, not of the Jewish, ceremonial, typical, ineffectual covenant. "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions which were under the first testament [or covenant] they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

The inspired writer, having thus clearly discriminated between the two covenants, and their respective priesthoods, offerings and dispensations, finds occasion to admonish those Hebrews, whom he distinguished from the carnal Israelites, as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling," and whom he exhorts to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus. Under the priesthood and apostleship of Christ Jesus, they were redeemed and

delivered from the law of carnal commandments, washed, cleansed and justified freely through the redemption that was in him; "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," or set apart, as the word *sanctified* here signifies; yet though redeemed from the law, and dead to it by the body of Christ, they are not without law, for they are under law to Christ; and his law is put in their hearts, and written in their minds. They are not therefore left to sin with impunity, for although the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death, the law, which God has written in their hearts, requires obedience to all the precepts of Christ; so that if his children forsake his law, and walk not in his judgments, if they break his statutes and keep not his commandments, then will he visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Instead, therefore, of indulging their carnal propensities in any departure from the divine rule in the New Testament, they are told that, "We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," or deliverance? The word of life under which the saints are born into the kingdom and come under the laws and ordinances of the gospel church, is the word which began to be spoken unto us by our Lord Jesus Christ, and was confirmed unto us by his apostles, who received their instruction and inspiration immediately from him. And inasmuch as Christ is evidently greater than Moses, or the angels, his words are to be observed with more sacred reverence. Not because our eternal salvation from death and hell depends on our obedience; for that is not the case, as is shown by the covenant and oath under which the saints are gathered. "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

“For by one offering he [Christ] hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.” Upon this assurance, the saints are faithfully admonished to approach the throne, and enter into the holiest of all by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. Not by sacrifices and offerings, as under the former covenant, but through Christ, as our High Priest, over the house of God. “Let us draw nigh with a pure heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; for he is faithful that promised. And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another, and so much more as ye see the day approaching.”

“For if we sin willfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth.” The pronoun *we* in this text includes the inspired writer with all his holy brethren, who are partakers of the heavenly calling, embracing all who have received the knowledge of the truth. They who know the truth are born and taught of God; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them. If we know the truth, we have received that knowledge; and if we have received it, it is by revelation; for flesh and blood cannot reveal it. The knowledge of the truth here spoken of is the knowledge of the truth of which the inspired writer is speaking, the truth of a deliverance from the law of sin and death, and a knowledge of the law of the

spirit of life in Christ Jesus our Lord. A spotless perfection before God, by the one offering of our great High Priest, received in a true heart, in which the law of Christ is written by the finger of God. If this be admitted, the question may arise, Can those who have thus received the knowledge of the truth, who are forever perfected, who are called holy brethren, and partakers of the heavenly calling, for whom Christ has obtained eternal redemption, and in whose hearts the Holy Ghost has written the law of holiness, can they sin willfully after having received all this? With their mind, and with all these spiritual gifts, they invariably serve the law of God. With these they cannot commit sin, neither willfully, nor in any other way; for his [God's] seed remaineth in them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; but they who have received this seed, and this knowledge of the truth, if Paul was one of them, do find another law in their members, warring against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. With their mind they truly serve the law of God; but with their flesh the law of sin. And now we ask for the man among all who have received the truth, either in ancient or in modern times, who has not sinned willfully after having received this experimental knowledge. The man who can lay his hand upon his heart, and in the presence of God who searches all hearts, say that he has never sinned willfully since he professed a hope in Christ, is a poor blind Pharisee, and does not have to go to the throne of grace with the petition, forgive my sins. But it is objected, Paul said, "If I do that which I allow not, it is no more I that do it; but sin that dwelleth in me." Very true, the spirit indeed is willing to serve God, and would never willingly, nor willfully, nor in any other way, sin, or offend against his God; but, as we have shown, while with the mind of Christ which every saint has, they invariably do serve the law of God, and delight in the spirit of holiness; still with their flesh they serve, and willfully serve the law of sin. In their flesh there dwells no good thing, and

in that spirit in them which is born of God, there dwells no evil thing. Every sinful act is necessarily willful, for an involuntary act is not regarded as a sin. Should a man much stronger than yourself take your hand in his and with it smite your friend or neighbor, in opposition to your will, in that case the act would be his and not yours. In every transgression of the children of God, they feel a consciousness that they have done it with the consent of their will, and that they have had the consent of their will in forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, is what burdens them with contrition and grief. The saint whose constant desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, but is hindered by providential circumstances over which he has no control, though deprived of a coveted privilege, is not conscious of guilt in having been detained. As the forsaking the assembling of ourselves together is named in the immediate context, we take that particular sin as an example of sinning willfully. The Christian who absents himself from the assembling of the church, either does it willfully, or against his will; if it be against his will and inclination, it is not sin; instead of reproof, he needs our sympathy; but if he absents himself from choice, having the ability and not the disposition, he sins willfully; and if he be a child of God, it is after he has received a knowledge of the truth. If there be any among our readers who have never, since they knew the truth, neglected this privilege willfully, or fully willing to do so, we will only exhort such not to be weary in well doing, for they shall, in due time, reap, if they faint not. But this one fault which the context tells us some are addicted to, is by no means the only fault wherein they sin willfully who have received the knowledge of the truth.

As under the old covenant, every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, so under the new covenant, a just recompense of reward for every transgression and disobedience of the saints is inevitable. But

the justness of the recompense must be determined by the provisions of the law under which the transgression was committed. The Christian is not punished according to the merciless law of Moses; nor was the disciple of Moses punished according to the provisions of the law of Christ. Although the law of Moses inflicted the penalty of death upon the transgressor, yet it provided substitutional offerings, and sacrifices. The offender might bring his sin offering to the priest, and the priest would make for him an offering, or atonement; yet there was a remembrance again made of sins every year. But the transgressor of the law of Christ can make no atonement. The last, and only, offering for the people of God has already been made, and can never be repeated; therefore to the willful sinner in the new covenant there remains no more sacrifice for sins. If it were possible for the child of grace to fall away, or lose his interest in the one offering by which Christ has perfected forever them that are sanctified, it would be impossible to renew him again to repentance; for to do so, Christ would require to be crucified again, and put to an open shame; as that is declared to be impossible, the conclusion is unavoidable, that for the Christian there remains no more sacrifice for sins. *No more* than what? In this same chapter in which we have our text, the record from the Psalms is copied, and put into the mouth of our High Priest, who when he cometh into the world, saith, "Sacrifices and offerings, thou wouldest not; but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings, and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo I come, [in the volume of the book it is written of me] to do thy will, O God." "By the which will we are sanctified [or set apart] through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." That is never to be repeated, or offered a second time. Under the law, "every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this man [Christ] after he had made one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God;

henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Sanctified, or set apart, by the same will which prepared for Christ a body, and which will Christ came to do. There is therefore no more sacrifice for sins, nor is it possible that any more sacrifice for sins shall ever be required, seeing that all the sins of all his people, past, present or to come, were laid on him, and he bare them in his own body on the tree, and put them away by the sacrifice of himself, and has obtained eternal redemption for them all.

Well, if the Christian then can make no expiation by any offering for his willful transgression, because there remaineth no more offering for sin, what does remain for him? Not a burning hell, nor a separation from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, nor can he possibly lose his interest in the atoning blood once offered for him by our great High Priest. These he cannot possibly lose; for Christ has said of all his sheep for whom he laid down his life, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and none shall be able to pluck them out of my Father's hands. I, and my Father are one." But still there is something that remains for the willful transgressor, who is made manifest as an heir of immortality by receiving the knowledge of the truth. There remains for him "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." He who has received a knowledge of the truth, knows his God too well to believe that his willful transgressions will go unchastised. He knows full well that God will judge his people; and those who have felt his rod, will scarcely fail to understand the fitness of the descriptive language of our text in regard to the nature and manner of the stripes. Who of all the saints have traveled far in their spiritual pilgrimage without ever having experienced this peculiar exercise, called, "a certain fearful looking for of

judgment?" Do any who have received the knowledge of the truth doubt that the Lord will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes? Do they doubt that whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son that he receives? Are any of them satisfied that they have never deserved that rod, and those stripes? If conscious then that we have been stubborn, willful, unruly, have not these convictions been followed with a deep sense of guiltiness, and fearful apprehensions of sore chastisement from the hand of the Lord? A *certain,* indescribable *fearful looking for of judgment.* The gracious smiles of the Lord are withdrawn; fearful clouds and darkness have gathered around and have fallen heavily upon us; even the hope that we have passed from death unto life recedes and is lost sight of. The tempter with all his cruel darts makes our troubles his sport. Not merely the faithful rod held in the hand of a heavenly parent and applied in the most tender parental love, are looked for; but such fiery indignation as God has prepared for the adversaries, or enemies of his government. They may be well satisfied that no fiery judgments brought with destruction can be in store for any of God's dear children; but that is the trying point. Am I a child of God, an heir of glory? Alas! The evidence is too far removed now to be available, and the disobedient, willful child is for the present cut asunder, and has his sad portion now with the hypocrites and unbelievers, where there is weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth.

We know there can be no fiery indignation for any of God's children; for God has sworn with an oath that he will not be wroth with them, nor rebuke them in wrath; nor does our text imply even a possibility that they shall ever be subjected to that fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries; but they shall feel that they deserve it; and in the hidings of the gracious countenance of the Lord, and in the total absence of the evidence of their acceptance with God, they

shall experience a *certain* fearful looking for it. The qualifying words *a certain,* express the idea that it is peculiar to the children of God, when under his chastening hand they feel the dreadful buffeting of Satan. It is *a certain;* for it is unlike the remorse and terror of devils and ungodly men, and so peculiar that none but the chastened saints can know anything about it. But O how sore the punishment to a child of grace to be left under these fearful apprehensions.

"What, to be banished from my God,
And yet forbid to die!"

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." That is, they were put to death, by being stoned, or executed in some other way. But Moses was only a servant, faithful in all his house. Christ is a Son over his own house; if we consider the superior dignity of Christ above that of a servant, and admit the justice of the punishment inflicted on him, or them who despised his law, we are called to *suppose* how much sorer punishment they deserve, who despise, disobey, lightly regard or trifle with the authority of him who reigns enthroned in eternal glory. Now let this matter be tried at the bar of the conscience of the saints, and when every point has been duly weighed and maturely considered, what will be the judgment of our own conscience. Shall we not conclude the indignity, if offered to Christ, is infinitely greater than if it were only offered to Moses? And if we speak of punishment proportioned to the magnitude of the offence, will we not suppose the offence being so much greater, the punishment deserved by the offender would be as much sorer? Surely we will say, if God should deal with us according to our deserts, he would crush us beneath his fiery wrath forever. But God does not deal with his children according to their deserts; for we are told in this same chapter, "their sins and their iniquities he will remember no more." He has engaged in covenant to "be merciful to their

unrighteousness. And the saints are told in the conclusion of this same chapter, that "we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, [or utter ruin] but of them who believe to the saving of the soul." And lest the saints should be overwhelmed by the searching scrutiny of this admonition, and in view of their short-comings, yield to despair, they are told to call to "remembrance the former days, in which they were illuminated, [or had received the knowledge of the truth] ye endured a great fight of affliction, partly while ye were made a gazing stock, both by reproaches and afflictions, and partly whilst ye became companions of them that were so used." Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.

Trifling with the laws of Christ, and lightly regarding his authority in his church, is in our text, by the pen of holy inspiration, described as treading under foot the Son of God, as counting the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the spirit of grace. This is truly very strong language; but let us see if the enormity of the offence referred to are too highly colored.

Can we disregard the authority of his precepts, and the authority which he has invested his church with authority to enforce, without trampling under our feet his authority? If we forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, how does such neglect comport with his commands, and with our professed allegiance to him, as the Head over all things to his church? Our disregard of this or any other command is practically saying, He shall not reign over us; we will not be subject to his orders; we will trample his commandments under our feet, by allowing our carnal lusts to be gratified at the expense of his laws. This is called treading the Son of God under our feet. How dreadful the thought, how fragrant the indignity and insult to him.

Well might this same inspired writer give the solemn charge to all the saints, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we refuse him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.”

In what other way is it possible for the subjects of his government to tread him under foot, than by despising, under-rating, repudiating, and disobeying his commands? Refusing him that speaketh from heaven. “We know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord.” And again, “The Lord shall judge his people.” While stores of vengeance are held in reserve for all the ungodly, judgment is provided for the people of God; God will judge and chastise his children, according to his word. “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” He knows the thoughts and intents of every heart; from his all seeing eye nothing can be concealed, either of action or motive. His foundation standeth sure, having this seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are his.”

“And have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing.” Aaron and his sons were sanctified, or set apart, for the priesthood by solemn consecration, but could not enter the holy place within the veil, without blood, on pain of instant death. Jesus Christ the High Priest, has by his own blood, according to the new covenant, entered within the veil for us, and is consecrated by his own blood, a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. With his own precious blood he has redeemed his chosen generation; as a holy priesthood unto God, and by virtue of that blood he has received his coronation as our King. We who are the subjects of his government cannot dispense with his yoke, and despise or transgress his

authority, without practically calling that blood of consecration in the New Testament which was shed for many, an unholy thing. If we claim to be our own, we deny that we are bought with a price. If we glorify not God in our body and spirit which are his, we virtually say that blood is an unholy thing; we deny its power to cleanse, purify and consecrate us to God. And as such a rebellious course on the part of his redeemed is always resisted by the spirit of grace which God has given as in our heavenly birth, to disobey Christ is to do despite to that spirit of grace. All our fleshly powers lust and war against that spirit, and that spirit wars against our flesh and against all the corruptions of our flesh, and these corruptions can never predominate over the spirit of grace in us, by and in harmony with its dictates, but always in despite to it, and hence the willfulness of our sinning.

We are aware that some have contended that the words of our text were not designed to apply to the children of God; that they were used to describe the ungodly in distinction from the saints. Why then does the inspired writer include himself with those to whom he applies the admonition? When have the ungodly ever received the knowledge of the truth? How can they to whom the Son of God has given no law trample his authority under their feet, by neglecting to assemble themselves together as the manner of some is? Who of all the ungodly have ever felt or known that *certain* fearful looking for of judgment, seeing it is distinctly declared in the Scriptures, “There is no fear of God before their eyes?” Others there are who have admitted that the language applies to the children of God; who are born of the Spirit, but contend that the text involves the doctrine of falling from grace. But this doctrine cannot be intended, seeing that in the same chapter it is declared, that Christ has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, and the Eternal God has declared concerning them, in this same connection, “I will put my laws into their hearts, and in

their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

While in the Lord they have righteousness and strength; in themselves, that is in their earthly nature, they are vile and polluted. The Lord is their righteousness, and he hath clothed them with his salvation, and they are made acceptable unto God, in the Beloved. They are both black and comely, black as the tents of Kedar in themselves, but in their Redeemer they are as white and pure as the curtains of Solomon. Christians wrong their own souls who try to shuffle off the force of these solemn admonitions on to some other class of beings. But whatever others may think or say, let those who have received the knowledge of the truth, regard it as the paramount business of their life to confess, obey, and follow the Lamb wherever he leads, through evil as well as through good report.

May we listen with profound reverence to the admonition of our subject, and hearken to, and not oppose or do despite to the spirit of grace. "For the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, [all classes of men, Jews and Gentiles, bond and free] teaching us, that denying ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world."

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 406 – 416

HEBREWS XII. 6.

BELOVED ELDER Beebe: – I would like to have you give your views on Hebrews 12. 6. I have never troubled you for your views before, knowing your time is taken up; but in our present bereavement we would be glad to have the right on that text.

THOMAS & MARY P. LEWIS.
Kelly's Corners, Mich., Feb. 20, 1880.

REPLY: – The text on which we are requested to express our views reads as follows: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth of every son whom he receiveth."

It seems so very natural for us, when smarting under the chastening hand of God, to conclude that he is angry with us, and in anger has withheld his tender mercies from us. The friends who visited Job in the days of his sore trials took this view of the subject, and added reproof and reproach to his over-burdened heart; and the heathen who saw the viper fasten his poisonous fangs upon the hand of Paul, thought it was in retribution for some dreadful crime that he had committed. The Jews also seemed to think that some unusual sin committed by the blind a man or his parents was the cause of his having been born blind. Satan himself is ever ready to aggravate the distress of the children of God, when pressed down to the gates of death by trials and afflictions, by his cruel suggestions that their tribulations are in evidence that they have no part or lot in the love of that God whose power and grace are amply sufficient to have averted the evil that has come upon them. The passions of our carnal nature are moved to resentment or approval of the treatment we receive from others as indicative of their hatred or love to us: we express our love by acts of kindness, and our hatred by acts of retaliation; but God's dealings with his children,

whether in stripes or healing mercies, are always in love, for he is infinitely above being excited by impulsive passions. It is very true, he visits the transgressions and iniquities of his children with his rod; but even then he chastens them and love, and always for their good and his glory. But all the trials, afflictions and bereavements to which the children of God are subject, are not to be regarded as punishment for our transgressions. The most willing and obedient of the saints, as well as the more wayward, must pass through fiery trials, for the trial of their faith, which is more precious than the trial of perishable gold; and God has kindly provided that his dear children shall all have the full benefit of the furnace in which he has chosen them. The apostle Peter has drawn a discriminating line between the suffering which God's children endure for their faults, and such as they experience for the trial of their faith, and warns the saints, saying, "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busybody another men's matters. Yet if any man suffers as a christian, let him not be ashamed; a ledge him glorify God on this behalf." – 1 Peter iv. 15, 16. "Wherefore," he continues, "let them that suffer according to the will of god, commit the keeping of their souls to him and while doing, as unto a faithful Creator."

Pardon the digression, if it be such, if we pause a moment to consider the apostle's admonition. Who is a murderer? "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." – 1 John iii. 15. Who is a thief? He who would dishonestly appropriate to oneself that which belongs to another, or who would rob a brother of his standing and fellowship with the saints, or covet in spiritual or temporal things that which is his neighbor's. Who is an evil doer? He that perverts equity, or watches for the haltings of others, that that which is lame should be turned out of the way, and not rather be healed. Who is a busybody another man's matters? He who is

heedless of the beam that is in his own eye, is quick to offer his service to remove an imaginary mote from his brother's eye. Such men, even if they are children of God, and do suffer, do not suffer as christians who do the will of God, as his will is laid down in the examples and precepts of Christ in the New Testament.

But to retain to our starting point in the 12th chapter of Hebrews, in which we find it so much, not only to admonish, but also to encourage the poor, afflicted, tried and tempted children of our God. Having in the preceding chapter spoken of the severe trials of the saints from the days of Abel down to the present dispensation, the writer arrays them as a cloud of witnesses, bearing testimony of the triumphs of faith, by which prophets and patriarchs endured as seeing him who is invisible, and admonishes the saints to lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race than a set before them. Looking unto Jesus, and recognizing him as the author and finisher of all genuine faith, as the author of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things which are not seen. With a single eye, a steadfast reliance on him for support and protection, and looking unto him as our pattern and guide. Look to the race which he so patiently, perseveringly, cheerfully and successfully ran in the great work of our salvation, the sorrows he endured, the enemies he encountered, the reproaches he bore, the patience he evinced, the unremitting progress which she made, never once faltering in the race, even though sin, death, and all the powers of darkness stood so terribly in his way. Yet for the joy that was sent before him he endured the cross despising the shame. Ah, yes; with steadfast eyes look to him.

"Whose race forever is complete,
Forever undisturbed his seat;

Myriads of angels round him fly,
And seeing his well gained victory."

See him now, exalted and seated at the right hand of the throne of God. And "consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind." What a wonderful protection from languor and weariness; what an antidote against fainting!

"His way he was much rougher and painful than mine?
Did Christ my Lord suffer, and shall I if repine?"

The infirmities of our nature are kindly considered by him
"Who drank the cup with stifled groan,
And said, My Father's will be done."

He knows what are the feelings of our infirmities, and how to succor them that are tempted. He knows that his spirit that he has put within us is willing to go with him to the prison and to the death; and well he knows too the weakness of our flesh, and that unless we have our eyes on him we shall be wary in faint. But we can say,

"Had I a view of the, my God,
Kingdoms and men would vanish soon;
Vanish as though I saw them not,
As a dim candle dies at noon.

"And then they might fight, and rage, and rave;
I should perceive there no way is no more
Than we can here shaking leaf
Win rattling thunders round us are roar."

Considering him, and the crushing sorrows he endured for us when sweating what were as great drops of blood falling to the ground, will reprovingly remind us that we have not resisted unto blood striving again sin; and that while

complaining of our light afflictions, which are but a momentary, we have forgotten, or failed to heed, the exhortation which speaketh unto us as unto children, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Observer, this very exhortation and rebuke recognize those unto whom they are addressed as children; they are not addressed to them as aliens or as enemies, but as on the children or sons, as the counsel and parental admonition of our heavenly Father who loves us, and has our real welfare constantly in view. “My son,” the development of that incorruptible and immortal seed, which is by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever. My son, in vital union with your heavenly Father, begotten of God, the Father of spirits, in Christ your seminal head, who is the first-born among many brethren. My son, and as a son, and heir of God, and joint heir with Jesus Christ. Heirs not only of his cross, but also of his glory. Loved of God your Father, even as Christ was loved of him. Not a mere prospective love, but with the same sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love with which your glorious and glorified Head was loved. “That the world may know that thou has sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” – John xvii. 23. And in the next verse Jesus says two the Father, “For thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.” With the same love with which the Father loved his only begotten Son before the foundation of the world, has he loved all his members in him. Mark the present tense of the love of god, “For whom the lord *loveth*.” It does not read, For whom he intends to love at some future time; but whom he loveth. If God’s love is immutable, it has always been precisely the same, from everlasting to everlasting; for he inhabiteth he eternity, and his name is holy. But if it is not immutable, though he made love to-day, he may cease to love to-morrow or hereafter. Many earthly parents who love their children, unintentionally injure them

by too much indulgence; but God, who is infinitely wise, provides for his children that discipline which is for their good and for his own Glory. When in former ages he winked at the abominable idolatry of the heathen nations, he severely scourgeth his chosen Israel for every disobedience and transgression of his law; and by the severity of his judgments clearly demonstrated his special regard for them as a peculiar people, chosen from all the family of mankind to be the type of the chosen generation, royal priesthood an holy nation which he had chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. And now while aliens, false professors and hypocrites are allowed to fill up the measure of their iniquities and Glory in their shame, the waters of a full cup are wrung out to his children; for all the day long they are plagued, and they're chastened every morning. But as their chastisements are in evidence of the special love of God to them, they are not to be despised, nor are the saints to faint when God rebukes them for there follies. None whom the lord love is can or will escape his rod, for he scourgeth of every son whom he receiveth. Discouraging as do not make them sons, for sonship is a vital relation; but it proves that they who endure it have a life which was in their parent before they were born of his spirit; and discouraging proves that they are children, and the God is their heavenly Father. Nor does there being received of God make them his children. The prodigal was a son before he went astray, and when he was afar off, as well as when he returned, and his father received him because he was his son. The kind in gracious reception by the Father, while it did not originate the relationship, proves that it exists. Hence it is added, "If ye endure chastening, God doeth with you as with sons; for what sun is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all [sons of God] are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

So very essential then are our chastisements, we cannot have a reliable evidence that we are children of God or errors of Glory without them. We should not, therefore, despise or undervalued them, nor indulge the thought that we could do without them; and whether they be administered in sore bereavements, as in the case of our brother and sister Lewis, in the taking from us our Josephs, our Simeons, or our darling Benjamins, and making us feel as though they would bring us down and sorrow to our graves, or in stripping us of our earthly treasures, or exposing us to cruel persecutions, reproaches, and slanderous assaults of wicked men; or if it be by sending leanness and barrenness in regard to spiritual things, and allowing the tempter to hurl his fiery darts, or in causing us to walk in darkness and in the shadow of death for a season; still and whenever shape or form our chastisements may come to us, they are in evidence that God loves us and regard just as sons, and all our afflictions are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory, while we look not on the temporal things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen, which are eternal, by faith “enduring as seeing him who is invisible.”

Cease, then, ye chastened children of the Most High God, to fret and murmur, to weep and sigh and groan. You’re tribulations are as essential to your spiritual prosperity, as your daily food is to the support and comfort of your earthly nature; we cannot do without them. At present they are not joyous, but grievous; but they shall afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them who are exercised thereby, and all the dear saints shall unite in the final ascriptions of praise, saying, “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” All of Zion’s conflicts shall end in peace.

“But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.” How very important,

then, is this evidence of a sacred vital relationship to God. None but sons are heirs of God, none but heirs have any inheritance in God our Savior; and all who are not chastened of the Lord our bastards, and not sons. Shall we then despise or murmur at the chase innings which we receive from the kind, loving in gracious hand of our heavenly Father?

Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits? Our God is not the father of our flesh, or fleshly nature; but if we are born of his Spirit, God is the Father of that spirit which is born of him. We have had the fathers of our flesh, fleshly fathers, for that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and the fathers of our flesh have corrected us, and as children of the flesh we have realized the benefit of their paternal discipline; and while we know they are liable to err in judgment, and to be controlled by their excitable passions, yet we have given them reverence; shall we not much rather submit to him who is the Father of our spirits, who is not subject to impulsive passions, whose wisdom, power and grace are infinite, who can not err, but always chastens for our good?

Again, *chastisement*, whether it be from our Father which is in heaven, the Father of our spirits, or of his spirit that is born of him, or from the fathers of our flesh, implies a discipline essentially different from vindictive wrath, or retributive vengeance, exacted only by the demands of inflexible justice: the former is a family discipline, administered and love for the good of the erring child, and in evidence of eternal love; while the latter is only in evidence of indignation and wrath, as in the case of those who despised Moses’law, who died without mercy. May we by grace be enabled in spirit to meekly say, Father in heaven, thy will be done.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 10
May 15, 1880

HEBREWS 12:15,16

Compassed about as we are with all the infirmities common to our brethren, it cannot be reasonably expected that we should feel ourself capable of expounding every passage of scripture which may be presented, in a manner satisfactory to our own mind, for we think there are but few if any who can more sensibly feel their inability to go beyond that which the gracious Lord may be pleased at times to afford us in understanding the unsearchable riches of the sacred volume of inspired truth. With such ability as we have, we have felt constrained to respond to the earnest solicitation of such as have regarded themselves babes in the kingdom of our blessed Lord, and we have taken great pleasure in trying to aid them in their investigation of the doctrine of God our Savior, in the hope that such views as we have been able to present may be made useful to them, and that they may be led more deeply into the glorious fulness of the subjects on which their minds have labored. But when the old experienced elders, whose abilities so far surpass our own have presented their queries, and asked our views on portions of the word, we have not so generally felt satisfied that they could ask simply for information sake. Be that however as it may, we shall not question the purity of Brother Suydam’s motive in asking of us our comments on the text proposed, which reads as follows:

“Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicators, or profane person as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birth right.”

Our time and space admonish us to make our comments brief, presuming on the old proverb that “A word to the wise

is sufficient." The admonitions of the inspired writer of this epistle were addressed to a peculiar people recognized by him as "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, and who had come to mount Zion, and unto the city of our God," etc., who in the spiritual fraternity of holy brethren, and in the fellow citizenship of the heavenly Jerusalem, were solemnly bound to observe all the laws, ordinances, admonitions and instructions which belong to the people of the living God. The admonition embraced in the text embraces a solemn charge in regard to three specified points of order, to be observed in the house of God.

First - Lest any man fail of the grace of God.
Second - Lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.
Third - Lest there be any such person as Esau, etc.

First. We cannot understand the text, as implying that there is a liability, or even a possibility, of failure in the grace of God, to secure the eternal salvation of all on whom it is bestowed, or to whom it was given in Christ Jesus, before the world began, for such a construction would sorely conflict with the general testimony of the scriptures, and tend directly to check the faith and confidence of the saints in that grace by which they are saved. But there is a sense, in perfect harmony with the doctrine of God our Savior, in which the saints are liable to fail of the grace of God and in that sense we should look diligently for and guard studiously against the liability of seeming to fail of the grace of God.

As an illustration of our view, we refer brother S. to chapter 4, and first verse of this epistle. "Let us therefore fear lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." Though all the promises of God in Christ are yea, and amen; still the saints are liable, though their doubting, and unbelief, to seem at least, to

come short of them. This, as every tried saints can testify when in doubt and unbelief, we cannot comfortably rest on the promises of God. - Though we do not feel disposed to dispute the truth of God, or the promises which he has so graciously confirmed by two immutable things in which it is impossible for God to lie; yet lacking confidence in the Spirit's work in applying these immutable promises to us personally, we of course, come short of resting on them and like those Israelites whose carcasses fell in the wilderness, and who could not enter into Canaan as a typical rest, so neither can we under such circumstances enter into the spiritual rest, the gospel sabbatic rest, because of unbelief, but when our faith triumphs over unbelief, we who believe do enter into rest. All the rest, and all the sweetness of the gospel enjoyed by the saints, is grace developed. The saints in the gospel are not under the law, but under grace, have not come to the mount that burned with fire and blackness, but to the heavenly Jerusalem, or *vision of peace;* therefore the grace which they are liable to fail of is that grace of God by which they enjoy their birth-right in the house and family of God. In looking diligently for examples of such failures, we may meet with instances wherein those in the genuineness of whose christian experience and calling we have no doubt, who either from a propensity to doubt the evidences of their adoption, or from want of stability in the doctrine, or from a restless, uneasy peevish or fretful disposition, seem to be carried about by every wind of doctrine, and are tossed to and fro, so that they really enjoy but very little rest or quietude. In this sense then, they fail of the grace of God, that is of the present enjoyment of it. But

Secondly. Under the charge embraced in this division of our subject, we shall find that a failure of so enjoying the manifestation of divine favor or grace, as we have briefly hinted at in the foregoing, sometimes has a tendency to produce roots of bitterness, which are attended with trouble

and defilement. The christian in whose deportment the spirit of grace does not seem to predominate, who becomes uneasy, restless and fidgety, renders himself far less desirable as a companion of the sons of grace, and yet labors under the mistaken notion that his merits are not duly appreciated; jealousy, the green-eyed monster, as it is called, gets a sly but death-like grasp on their disordered mind, the seed is sown, the root is formed in the fleshly soil which is so remarkably genial to its growth, and the root springs up with rapid but malignant haste, bitterness and defilement are its legitimate fruits. Has not our brother S. in his long experiences in the house of God observed cases, not only among the private members, but even among the ministers who occupy the walls of Zion, where roots of bitterness have been in this, or in a similar manner produced? If brother Suydam has forgotten, we will stir up his pure mind by way of remembrance. When some thirty years ago he was a resident of this part of the country at a time when "many departed from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils," and also at a time when many who had long stood with us, (say in the Warwick Association, for example) were defiled, and so much defiled that we were under the stern necessity of withdrawing our fellowship from them. - Even since the division of the professedly Baptist denomination have we not witnessed, from time to time roots of bitterness springing up? The blessings of the New covenant *come down.* The unity of brethren as described in Psa. cxxxiii is compared to the oil which was poured on Aaron's head, and which ran down and like the dew of Hermon, which descended upon the mountains of Zion. And truly every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights; but roots of bitterness which trouble and defile the saints come from an opposite direction. They, like modern revivals and humanly devised religious institutions, invariably *spring up* or are got up according to the language of Ashdod. The sons of God are solemnly charged to look

diligently, a mere superficial observation is not enough, but Jerusalem must be searched as with lighted candles, and where these pernicious roots are found, however long they may have been bedded in the traditions of those we love; they must be removed. It may require some digging with the mattock; but we shall find, "on all hills that shall be digged with a mattock, there shall not come thither the fear of briars and thorns." Isa. vii. 25. Sometimes these roots have required a diligent search, in order to find them. Men have from time to time crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning God's grace into laciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Jude 4. At least the mediatorial existence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the bosom of the eternal Father from the ancients of eternity, as the Head of his body, the church, and as the life of his members, has been denied by some of them of late. Whatever the root may be, or by whomsoever sown or planted, we rejoice in the assurance that every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. These roots produce much trouble among the saints, as we are told by our Lord, it is impossible but offenses shall come among you; but woe unto that man by whom they come. What trouble was brought upon the churches of Antioch, Galatia, and at Corinth; and there were those also who troubled the saints of Thessalonica, and Paul would that they who troubled the saints were even cut off. But he admonished those who were troubled to "rest with us." Nor is it uncommon for many to become defiled, from the same cause of defection, especially where the disorder originates with persons who hold prominent positions. Many are apt to drink in the poisonous theories, doctrine and disorders, or to sustain those who are sowing them broadcast, and thus do they become defiled. Indeed we have been misinformed, if there are none even in the latitude of our esteemed brother, who by listening to the false representations made to them by designing men, have

become so far defiled as to effect their fellowship for and confidence in some of their brethren, with whom they had enjoyed uninterrupted fellowship for many years, if not even to the extent of drinking in the same sentiments which have never failed to produce the like results. By this remark we do not mean to reflect on brethren in the vicinity of brother Suydam, for so far as our knowledge extends, the brethren of that locality are as sound and orderly as the saints in any other part of our acquaintance. But where shall we, in this day of rebuke and blasphemy find the people of our God perfectly free from the troubles and defilement occasioned by wicked men and seducers, who shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived? May the Lord enable us to look diligently to this matter, and may he graciously preserve us from the defilement of error, and from the trouble consequent therein, and rid and deliver us from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood, that our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace, that our gardens may be full, affording all manner of store; that our oxen may be strong to labor; that there be no breaking in, nor going out, that there be no complaining in our streets. Happy is the people that is in such a case, yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Psa. cxliv 11-15.

Third - Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat, sold his birthright. There are sometimes to be found in what we call the visible church of Christ some whose standing and connection with the church is like that of Esau in the family of the patriarch Isaac. So far as a nominal standing is considered they have been received on profession of their faith, and regularly admitted to fellowship, and to the communion of the church. Like Esau they have a birthright, so far as relates to nominal membership in the church, though like him, they may be

destitute of the saving love of God in their hearts. Their association with the family of God did not lessen their relish for sin, nor give them a love for holiness. Their strong propensities may be so disguised as to evade the observation of the saints, and like their proto-type, they may display much zeal both *in willing* and *in running;* but that predominating love for the world which is deeply rooted in them will be very likely some time to discover itself, especially when a conflict arises between their carnal appetites, and a conformity to the order of the kingdom of our Redeemer. On such occasions the latter will be abandoned, and the former gratified. The birthright is not so sacred with them, as their relish for carnal enjoyments is strong and unconquerable. There were many of this class became disciples to our Redeemer when he was here in the flesh; and they followed him from place to place, but not in the regeneration. Their fidelity was severely tested by our Lord, whose Omniscient eye saw all the deception and hypocrisy of their hearts; and he charged on them that they followed him for the sake of the loaves and the fishes, of which they had eaten and were filled. They desired the meat that perisheth, but had no hungering after that bread which came down from heaven; and when plainly told that except they ate the flesh and drank the blood of Jesus, they had no life in him, they protested against the doctrine, discarded their birthright, and apostatized from their discipleship. But when they went away and left the little company who had nowhere else to go because Christ had the words of eternal life, their place was to be occupied in succeeding ages by others of like character who have ever infested the christian profession. The church is most solemnly and frequently admonished to beware of them. Occasionally we have striking illustrations of the kind. So long as there is nothing appears to cross their trace, while they can find smooth sailing, and their aspiring ambition can be gratified, they make no demonstration, perceptible to the saints, of their

heartless forms, and empty professions. But when their profession or conformity to rules observed in the church of God comes in collision with their vain desires, ambitious notions, and lofty aspirations for distinction, their birthright is trafficked away; the mess of pottage is secured; the authority of the church to call them to order is denounced and defied; and they go to their own company. We have had some painful exemplifications of this in some of *whom we have made a difference, pulling them out of the fire, while we have hated their garments spotted with the flesh;*who after becoming indebted to the kindly office of well-meaning, but mistaken brethren, for all the standing they ever had among us, have on the first opportunity, turned on those who have warmed them into activity, and tried to sting them to death and not unfrequently for the base purpose of elevating themselves, gratifying their carnal desires, or obtaining some morsel of meat by sinking, if possible, their benefactors. What to them is a birthright which deprives them of carnal gratifications and which requires subjection to the authority of Christ to his church?

But we presume the inspired writer designed to admonish the saints that carnality and inordinate desires are not confined to those who never knew our God. Christians carry about with them a body of sin, their carnal nature is as strongly disposed for self-gratification as it ever was, only through grace abounding they are sometimes enabled to keep their bodies under, or in, subjection. The birthright of the saints is by no corruptible seed; but of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord which liveth and abideth forever. This birthright they cannot sell, for this life into which they are born, is hid with Christ in God, and the inheritance to which it establishes their claim is incorruptible, undefiled, and can never fade away. But the privilege of their birthright, so far as it relates to the privilege of the house of God, the fellowship of their brethren, and their enjoyment of social

intercourse with their Heavenly Father's children, may be sold for morsels of carnal gratification. Many examples of this may be brought, as for instance the child of God who yields to the carnal desires of his flesh, the miser, the drunkard, the glutton, the fornicator and the profane person. Christ our Lord has commanded his people to deny themselves, take up the cross and follow him. And his grace has appeared, teaching us that denying ourselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteous, and godly in the present world. But are there instances wherein some of God's dear children have for the gratification of an extravagant thirst, drank to intoxication when they were fully aware that by such indulgence they were wounding the hearts of their brethren, and sacrificing the fellowship of the church, and thus selling their birthright; and so also in regard to all the other self-gratifications referred to above.

Before we leave this part of the subject, permit us to enquire if there are no cases in which christians have bartered away their rights of birth, in the privileges of Zion, at a very cheap rate, say for one morsel of meat? Have none of them absented themselves from the solemn feasts of Zion, rather than not secure the earnings of a few hours, rather than offend some gossiping friends who have called just in time to prevent their going to some appointment of the church, or has not the gratification of a lazy sluggish propensity kept them from their privilege in the assembly of the saints, even when there has been no other impediment in their way.

Once more, are there none who have sold their houses and lands, where they have been near to, and in the midst of the saints, and where they have had the privileges of the ordinances of the house of God, who for the consideration of a prospect of making more money, have sold out the privilege of their birth, pulled up stakes, and moved entirely out of the reach of all social privileges with their brethren?

Let us look diligently to this matter, lest there be found in us an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the Lord.

Brother Suydam, and all our readers, will you please accept the foregoing as being about as well as we can do for them in expressing to them what has been on our mind in regard to the subject embraced in the text. The very best that we can write on any subject connected with the precious things of the kingdom is but poor. May the Lord give us all a clearer light and enable us to walk in the light as children of it, until it shall be his pleasure to call us hence to an abode in the unsullied glory of his immediate presence. - Amen.

Middletown, N.Y.,
Feb. 15, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 3
Pages 26 - 35

HEBREWS XII. 16, 17.

"Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

The birthright of Esau, as the firstborn of the patriarch Isaac, was only that which entitled him to a temporal inheritance, which consisted in earthly dominion, and worldly possessions, and in its figurative import, set forth the spiritual privileges of the saints, in the house of God, under the gospel dispensation, these privileges and rights which belong to them in the gospel organization of the church, by virture of their spiritual birthright, such as church membership, and the fellowship, and communion of the saints, as belonging to the household of faith. Esau, as we are informed, despised his birthright, and sold it to Jacob for a mess of pottage. Of course we are not to understand that the eternal inheritance of the saints in glory can be by them either bought or sold; for that inheritance is incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away, because it is reserved for them in heaven, and they are kept for the possession and enjoyment of it, by the power of God, through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time. (1 Peter i. 4,5.) The apostle's admonition in our text, implies that there are, or may be, among the saints in the christian church, while here on earth, some, who, like Esau, will barter away their spiritual privileges in the church, for carnal gratifications. This they can do to a limited extent. Those who are born of God are commanded to take Christ's yoke, and learn of him, to deny themselves of all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, to live soberly, righteously and godly; and they are assured that in this course, they shall find rest to their

souls. This is their peculiar birthright, so far as concerns their privileges in the Zion of God, here on earth. But if to gratify the lusts of the flesh, they will walk disorderly, in rioting, drunkenness, or in any other manner of disorder, they sell at a cheap rate, the social, substantial and spiritual privileges of their birthright, for the momentary gratification of the flesh. So also when the children of God forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is, they sell a precious birthright privilege, for the accommodation of some worldly lust. It may be their desire to accumulate worldly gain, or to gratify a lazy inclination; but in all cases it is only for pottage. If our carnal natures were, as some have contended, born again, or made spiritual, there would be in us no such wicked propensities to please; but we find by experience, that in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good; while with the mind we serve the law of God, with our flesh we serve the law of sin. There is in our depraved nature, a strong craving something for a certain kind of red pottage, as near as we can describe it, like this; to build up a sort of reputation by magnifying the faults of our brethren, in the gratification of which, we are inclined to make a brother an offender for a word; to thrust with side and shoulder, by disparaging the reputation of our fellows, so that we may be ourselves considered the largest fish in the pond; but the privileges of birthright dictates the better way, to bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. We have not time or space now to show in how many ways christians may exchange their most valuable birthright enjoyments for carnal gratifications.

We are requested to dwell more particularly on the seventeenth verse, wherein we are told that Esau could find no place for repentance, though he sought it with tears. The blessing in which Jacob supplanted Esau was pronounced in these words, “God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine: let people

serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee." - Gen. xxvii. 28,29. How diligently Esau sought to rescind the transaction of his foolish bargain will appear by the account given in the same chapter. But his sorrow and tears were unavailing, he could find no place for them, or for repentance; he was held strictly to his bargain; though very much against his will. Isaac said, I have blessed him (Jacob), yea, and he shall be blessed. "And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceedingly bitter cry." But alas, all was unavailing. His appetite had been gratified with the coveted red pottage, and his birthright was irrecoverably gone. Is it not even so in the application of the figure to the saints? If they live after the flesh, shall they not die? When christians have been drawn away from the high and holy vocation wherewith they are called of God, by their carnal lusts, do they not lose the fellowship of their brethren? That fellowship and confidence is their birthright; but when sold for pottage, how hard it is to be regained. When the adversary has hailed thee to the judge, and the judge has delivered thee to the officer, and thou art cast into prison, thou shalt in no case come out thence until thou hast paid the utmost farthing. The minister, who in preaching, yields to the morbid craving for the red pottage of popular applause, and for a little taste of popularity, keeps back part of his message, or countenances that which is contrary to the word, will sink in the esteem of his faithful brethren, and finally lose the fellowship of the church of God. He may be employed as a preacher for antichrist, but his birthright has gone for red pottage. Paul does not say that the saints shall never find place for repentance, or by repentance, restoration to birthright privileges; for some wicked prodigals have been reinstated in the family; but there have been others, not a few, who have had to mourn with "exceeding bitter crying," that they, for

the gratification of their carnal propensities, have irrecoverably lost the confidence of their brethren, and birthright privileges in the church of Christ. May God grant us grace, to keep our bodies under, to walk circumspectly, and to enjoy the blessed privileges of the house of God, until we shall be delivered from the corruptions of the flesh, and awake with the likeness of our glorious and glorified Redeemer.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 15, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 239 - 242

HEBREWS 12.22-24

"But ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

The inspired apostle Paul, who is presumed to have written this epistle, after having discussed very fully the nature and import of the Levitical priesthood, and all its typical bearings, in prefiguring the great High Priest of our profession, and his royal priesthood, having not only compared, but also contrasted the former with the latter, most faithfully admonishes the saints to consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, and to render strict obedience to him, and see that we refuse not him that speaketh. "For," says he, "if they escape not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." He exhorts them to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and run the race set before them, looking not now to Moses, who, as a servant, was faithful, but unto Christ, the Son of God, who is over his own house, and to lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and to make straight paths for their feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be deified; lest there be any fornicator, or

profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." These solemn admonitions are enforced by the consideration of their high and holy calling and the superior dignity of Christ as a Son above that of Moses as a servant. If under Moses, in his inferior capacity, every transgression received a just recompense of reward, and if "he that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God," or refused him that speaketh from heaven? All who transgressed or failed to obey the law administered by Moses were subjected to the pains and penalties of that law, and died without mercy, for there was no mercy in that law. Moses could not judge them by the law of Christ, which is written in the hearts of the children of God under the gospel, but by that law which was written on tables of stone; that law could show no mercy, hence they died without mercy; but in the law written in the heart, God is merciful to the transgressions of his people, and will remember them no more. Still the punishment of which the saints are thought worthy, who transgress the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, is much sorer than that under Moses, inasmuch as Moses could only inflict temporal judgments, and under the law of Christ spiritual judgments, such as leanness, barrenness, and fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall destroy, not the saints, but the adversaries. He visits their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with many stripes, nevertheless his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away.

As an incentive to greater diligence and more profound attention, to deeper reverence and more implicit obedience to the law of Jesus, the apostle says, "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they

that heard, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more," "But," says he, "ye are come unto mount Zion." How striking is the contrast! Mount Sinai, in Arabia, typified by the bondmaid, answering to that Jerusalem which gendereth to bondage, and which is in bondage with her children. Where the voice of God was heard in thunder tones, proclaiming the precepts of the covenant of works, the ministration of death, the display of the awful terror of the Lord, demonstrating the impossibility of approaching unto God by the deeds of the law.

"Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that word
Which God on Sinai spoke."

In that mountain no refuge could be found for either man or beast, but all who approached were stoned, or thrust through with a dart. But Christ, our High Priest, has redeemed us from the terror of that law.

"And we are come to Sion's hill,
The city of our God,
Where milder words declare his will,
And spread his love abroad."

Mount Zion, or Sion, as it is rendered in the New Testament, was literally the city of David, the seat and centre of the government of the commonwealth of Israel, fortified with invincible walls and mighty towers, abounding with every possible comfort and security for its inhabitants and located upon the mountains of Zion, which were refreshed with the dews of Hermon, where the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This city is frequently used, both in the Old and New Testament, to represent the church of God in her gospel organization, strength and beauty. "God is in

the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." "Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." "Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God." The gospel church is Mount Sion, and she is the city of the living God. Ezekiel and John saw this holy city of our Cod in their vision. John says, And he shewed me "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." This holy city is the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife. To the church of the living God, thus presented as Mount Sion, and as the city of the living God, every regenerated follower of Christ, under the gospel has come. This Mount Sion, this city of the living God, is the heavenly Jerusalem. Not that Jerusalem which gendereth to bondage, which was destroyed, but the heavenly Jerusalem, which is above, is free, and which is the mother of all who, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise, and children of the free woman. The city to which the saints are now come is the city of the living God. He is so called, not only because he is alive, and lives of himself, being self-existent and independent, but because he is the source and fountain of all spirituality and vitality to all his saints. It is his city because he is the founder of it, and her name is, "The Lord is there." He is the maker and builder of it, it is not made with hands. It is his because he has formed it, for he says, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise. And again, he says, "And they shall call them, Thy holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." The saints have come also to an innumerable company of angels. The term "angels," in this place, we think means the saints in their spiritual existence. Their flesh and blood cannot come into this spiritual communion, for it cannot inherit the kingdom; no man is here known after the flesh; the flesh profiteth nothing; they have no confidence in it, for it lusts against the angel, or spirit, and all its works are in direct opposition to the fruits of the Spirit. Christ says of his

little ones (and all his children are little ones), that their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven. Their fleshly powers cannot behold the face of God, but their angel, or spirit, that which is born of the Spirit, does behold the face of God, for he that hath seen Jesus hath seen the Father also, not by natural sight, but by that spiritual discernment which is peculiar to the new man. The number of these angels is definite, but no man can number them, hence to us who come to Sion the company of them is innumerable, for it includes the whole family in heaven and in earth. They constitute one general assembly, embracing all that were chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, all who are and were predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, all for whom Jesus died, for whom he arose, and for whom he ever liveth to intercede. This general assembly is the church of the firstborn, which is written or enrolled in heaven. Christ, in his mediatorial headship of his church, in all things must have the pre-eminence. He is the first begotten from the dead, and he is called the firstborn of every creature, and that he should be the firstborn among many brethren. This Mount Sion, this city of the living God, this heavenly Jerusalem, this innumerable company of angels, this general assembly, then, is no more nor less than the church of Jesus Christ, his body and his members, his flesh and his bones, and one with him, even as he is one with the Father. They have come also to God, the judge of all.

We have already noticed in the foregoing remarks that God is in the midst of Zion, that she cannot be moved. He has chosen her for his dwelling-place, and in her will he dwell forever, for he has desired it. The God of Zion is the judge of all; his judgment has decided and fixed the destiny of all beings, of all events and of all worlds. Judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne, and from his decision no

appeal can be made. But there is a special sense in which all the subjects of his spiritual kingdom who have come to Zion have come to him as their judge. When called and quickened with spiritual life, each subject of his saving power finds himself arrested and arraigned before his judgment-bar, and his sins are set in order before him. The book of the divine law is brought before his court, and all the transgressions of its precepts are plainly pointed out, and all other judgments as to our case are effectually set aside. We are made conscious that whatever has been our own judgment in regard to our standing, our guilt or innocence, our merits or demerits, our ability or inability, or whatever judgments may have been decided for or against us by our fellow-men, are found to be null and void. We come to God as the judge of all; the case is between the individual and God the judge. Before our arrest we had judged of our own case favorably, for we knew not the deep depravity of our own hearts, and we even have thought justice was on our side, but now that we stand before the eternal Judge, we find that we are guilty and ruined, helpless and despairing. Now we change our judgment, and decide that justice is truly against us, and that we cannot be saved without infringement of the justice of God. But neither our first or second judgment can stand, for God is judge himself, and when he by his Spirit has made known his decision in our case, we know that it cannot be reversed. He shows us truly how guilty we are, and how justly we deserve his wrath, but he also shows us that he can be just, and the justifier of the ungodly. Christ is to us revealed as our Savior, our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification and Redemption, and we can rely with joy and confidence on this decision, for it, being the decision of God the judge of all, is irrevocable. We come to God, the judge of all, in regard to all things that concern us for time and for eternity. As our judge he establishes our goings, the paths in which we are to tread, leading us in a way that we knew not, and in paths which we had not known. As our judge we learn

(slowly perhaps) to commit to him the keeping of our souls, to decide for us what is best, and to withhold from us what he sees would not be for our good or his glory. Our feelings and our judgment we lay aside, and search the volume which contains a record of his decision, with a desire that we may walk in all his judgments and obey all his precepts. If we transgress his law (as we are conscious we do daily) we still have to do with him as our judge, for the Lord will judge his people. If our enemies set upon us to destroy us, we are not to avenge ourselves, for God is the judge of all; vengeance belongs to him, he will repay. If we meet with offenses, or are grieved with the course of our brethren, or have wounded them, we are not competent to judge the case, but he is the judge still. We are to watch closely the judgments which he has recorded in every case, and conform to them. When Israel had no king or judge, we are told that every man did that which was good in his own eyes. But such is not our right now, as citizens of Sion. May all of us who have entered the gates of the holy city, and eaten of the tree of life, ever come boldly, freely, unreservedly to him as the Judge of all, and submit all our concerns to him.

"And to the spirits of just men made perfect." By just men, we understand those who are freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, for no other men are just in the sight of God, the judge of all. Their spirits we understand to be what we have treated on as their angels; their spiritual life and immortality; that which is born of the Spirit; and in this there is a unity. There is one body and one spirit, even as they are all called in one hope of their calling. But while here in the flesh, even the spirit of the child of God is not perfected. It has not attained to the consummation of its perfection, or the fullness of its glory. Not yet so happy, so free from oppression, conflict and trials as it shall hereafter be. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he [who is our life] shall appear, we shall be like

him," and that will be perfection truly. Here we see but in part, we know but in part, but when that which is but in part shall be done away, we shall see as we are seen, and know even as we are known. The spirits of the saints who have finished their course on earth are now perfected. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the spirits of the prophets and apostles, are perfected, but they have not left Sion, for the Mount Sion to which we are come abideth forever. This kingdom shall break in pieces all other kingdoms, and it shall stand forever; it is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that hath no end, and all who are brought from the east and from the west, the north and the south, shall sit down in the kingdom with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. The mortality of our earthly bodies cannot interrupt the communion of the spirits of the just.

"The saints on earth, and all the dead,
But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living Head,
And of his grace partake."

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." We have not come to Moses, the servant, but to Jesus, the Son, to Jesus the Savior, the mediator of the new covenant, the mediator between God and men. The new covenant is contrasted with the old covenant, which was a ministration of death, but the new is a covenant of life and peace. "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should not place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of

Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old." (Heb. 8:7-13) As Aaron and his sons in their priestly office ministered as mediators at the altars, under the old covenant, with the blood of calves and other victims, which were offered continually in mediation for Israel, so Jesus, the High Priest of our profession, is the Mediator of the New Testament, or covenant. In the new covenant the spiritual Hebrew, or Israelite, draws near unto God by a new and living way, which he has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. It is therefore through Jesus Christ as our Mediator that we enter into the holiest of all, that we come unto God by him, and from the least to the greatest all know God, which knowledge is eternal life. "Now," says the apostle, "of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." (Heb. 8:1,2) The apostle in thus summing up, compares and contrasts the two covenants, and the mediators of them, respectively, and shows in verse six that Jesus has obtained a more excellent ministry than that of Aaron, under the first testament, and that "by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." The old covenant was established on conditional terms; Life and temporal blessings were promised if they obeyed its provisions, but death and temporal judgments if they transgressed; but the new covenant is a better covenant, and established upon better promises,

unconditional promises, promises which are confirmed by two immutable things, by the oath of him who can swear by no greater, by the immutability of his counsel. "And for this cause he [Jesus] is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9:15) "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Not yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entered into the holy place every year with the blood of others But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation."

"And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The blood of sprinkling to which the new covenant saints are come, is the blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed for the remission of their sins, and the sprinkling of that blood signifies its application to those for whom it was shed. As Peter applies it, to the "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Answering to the application of the blood of the passover lamb, in the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, which blood was applied to the door-posts of the dwellings of those who were to eat the passover, and were saved from the angel of wrath, and redeemed from the house of bondage. "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people,

saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." (Heb. 9:18-23) The purification of the children of the new covenant is effected by the sprinkling of his blood, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, and who has obtained eternal redemption for them. His blood speaketh better things than did the blood of Abel. The voice of Abel's blood called from the ground for retribution upon Cain, but the voice of Jesus' blood speaks peace, deliverance, salvation. "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." (Col. 1:20) The language of Jesus' blood sprinkled upon his redeemed people is that of peace, it bids the messenger of divine wrath pass over those on whom it is sprinkled; no wrath can enter there, no condemnation, no guilt can there be found, for his blood cleanseth them from all guilt. It speaks in soothing accents to the despairing sinner, and bids him lift up his head and rejoice in Christ his Savior; it speaks deliverance to the captives, of opening the prison to them that are bound. His blood proclaims a complete and full salvation to all for whom it is shed, and of an inheritance of immortal glory beyond the grave.

We have briefly noticed the most prominent points embraced in the text; on each there is room for much enlargement, but the very manifest design of the apostle was, by all these considerations, to urge and admonish the saints to see that they refuse not him that speaketh. Higher, nobler, loftier considerations than any presented in the law of a carnal

commandment, or enforced by the merciless rod of Moses, appeal to the hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and to run with patience the race which is set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
March 15, 1862.

Republished: The Remnant
Volume 3, No. 2 – March – April, 1989

HEBREWS 12:22-24

Reply to Brother S. R. Burgess:

"But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

The Hebrews, as such, were brought up under the ritual and ceremonies of the Levitical law, and seemed very strongly inclined to cling to the observance of legal traditions, works and customs, from which the inspired writer labored to convert them. The whole epistle is devoted to that end. The two covenants are compared and contrasted, the priesthood of Christ, shown to be of a far superior order to that of Aaron and his sons; the one by the law of a carnal commandment, the other by the power of an endless life. But in the changing of the priesthood there was of necessity a changing of the law. "For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Thus the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me (the saints) free from the law of sin and death. Being therefore redeemed from the dominion of the law and brought under law to Christ, the saints are required to obey the precepts of Christ from higher and nobler motives; and they are qualified for their new allegiance to Christ, not by fleshly or carnal ability, but by being made partakers of the same power of an endless life. Instead of being licensed to sin because grace

abounds, and because abounding grace has made them free from the law, the apostle urges their obedience to Christ from that very consideration. "For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and to the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake) (Hebrews 12:18-21)."

"Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that word
That God, on Sinai, spoke."

"*But ye are come unto Mount Sion"* (or Zion), which place literally was the highest eminence in Jerusalem, and the place of power, where stood the royal palace of the King of Israel, enclosed by invincible towers and walls of strength; a place of safety, etc. In all respects Zion was a type of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, in her highest elevation, the palace of the great king, the center and throne of the spiritual Israel of our God. Hither, by grace, the saints of the gospel dispensation have come to worship the Lord their God in his holy hill. Not to be terrified by blackness and darkness, which even Moses could not endure without fear and quaking, but a peaceable habitation, a quiet dwelling place where those who come are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to go out no more forever. Zion, the perfection of beauty, out of which God hath shined, for God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.

"*And unto the city of the living God."* Jerusalem in the type was the consecrated city of God, and Mount Zion was embraced and enclosed within her sacred precincts. The very name of the city signifys the vision of peace, beautifully illustrative of the church of God in her gospel splendor. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, upon the sides of the North; the city of the Great King. The glory of this city is more perfectly delineated in the vision of John, as he saw her descending from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. See Revelation 21st and 22nd chapters. It is the city of the Living God, not of some imaginary or idol god. He is the God of Life, who lives independently, being self-existent and eternal; the source and fountain of life, especially so of all spiritual eternal life; the true God and Eternal Life, in whom the life of all the saints with Christ is hidden. All other gods are dead; without vitality themselves, they can impart no quickening power to their worshipers. The God of our salvation lives, and blessed be our Rock. The city which the living God himself hath built, and in which he has set his throne, in which he will dwell forever, because he hath desired it, is truly the city of the living God; and to this city the saints are come. This city of the living God is the Heavenly Jerusalem. Contrasted with the earthly or typical Jerusalem, which like Hagar the bond-woman, gendering to bondage, being herself a slave, she can not be the mother of a free posterity; she is in bondage with her children; they shall not be heir with the children of the free woman. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free; and it is just as impossible for her to be the mother of a slave as for Hagar to be the mother of a free child. Those who are born of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, are as Isaac was; they have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father.

"*And to an innumerable company of angels."* The term *angels* is variously applied in the scriptures; sometimes,

and perhaps generally, to an order of beings superior to men, as the angels of glory, such as announced the birth of our Savior; and frequently the name is applied to the messengers or ministers of the gospel, as in I Timothy 5:21, and also the angels of the seven churches in Asia. But in this text we understand the term as applied to the spirits of just men made perfect; the disembodied spirits of the saints in glory. Although there is a definite number of these, perfectly known to God, yet the multitude of them cannot be counted by men, and therefore they are an innumerable company, and in the same kingdom or city into which the saints in the gospel church have come. They have come from the East and the West, the North and the South, and are set down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of our God; not with the fleshly bodies of the patriarchs, for they have long ago returned to dust, and in their graves await the voice of the Arch Angel and the trump of God to raise them up spiritual bodies in the last time. The kingdom of Christ being a spiritual kingdom, cannot be inherited by flesh and blood, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (I Corinthians 15:50). Thus the apostle could speak of being absent in body, but present in spirit, with the saints. This is blessed spiritual society to those who are born of the Spirit, and whose angels do always behold the face of their Father in heaven (Matthew 18:10).

"*To the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven."* This general assembly is the church of the First Born, the church of Christ, for he is the First Born. He was not the first born in his flesh, for millions were born in the flesh before his incarnation; but he is the first begotten of the dead (Revelation 1:5). And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead (Colossians 1:17). The first born of every creature (Colossians 1:15). And God has predestinated whom he did foreknow to be conformed to his image, that he may

be the first born among many brethren (Romans 8:29). His church called out from all the tribes of the earth, come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All the members of his body, the church, shall come to him in general assembly, called out from the world and brought with singing to Zion; gathered with his arm and carried in his bosom. His church is the general assembly, for all the saints are assembled within her sacred precincts. And their names are written in heaven. "And in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them (Psalm 139:16)." "They are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world (Revelation 13:8)." See also Revelation 20:12 and 15. The record of the saints in heaven implies not only their personal election in Christ before the world began, but also their recognition in his gospel church, registered in and fellowshiped by the whole general assembly as the living in Jerusalem, as citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

"*And to God, the Judge of all."* All the saints were arraigned before God, in his judicial character, when they stood before the bar of justice, and before the mountain that burned with fire, and there they were stoned to death, and thrust through with cruel arrows. But their Surety appeared on their behalf and paid for them the ransom price. He was delivered up to die for their iniquities, and he arose again for their justification. Now being freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, they are redeemed unto God; brought nigh to God, and find him in Christ not only their Judge, whose decisions are final and irrevocable, but also their Advocate. "It is God that justifieth (Romans 8:33)." Now they rejoice in him as their Judge, and appeal to him as such, for they know that it is written, "The Lord shall judge his people. He is the Judge of all; of all beings, of all events,

and of all worlds. He is the Judge of all their necessities, their supplies, their trials and their deliverances, their conflicts and their victories, and as they have confidence in him, they can freely, unreservedly and cheerfully commit their cause to him, and rest assured that justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; righteousness and truth go before his face. Once they were in awful dread of appearing before him, but now his terror shall not make them afraid. Their longing spirits ardently cry out from time to time, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God (Psalm 42:1,2)."

"*And to the spirits of just men made perfect."* These we understand to be the same as are called the innumerable company of angels. They are the spirits of just men; men who are justified freely, fully and everlastingly, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; made perfect by that one offering by which Christ has perfected them that are sanctified; clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. They were *made*perfect, they did not make themselves so; for "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord (Isaiah 54:17)." These are just men, for God hath justified them; they are made perfect, for Christ has forever perfected them. Their bodies may be moldering in their graves, but we are in communion with their spirits; for all being born of the one spirit, there is one body and one spirit, even as we are all called in one hope of our calling. One Lord, one faith and one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It is in the spirit we commune with them; the flesh profiteth nothing.

"*And to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant."* In coming to this heavenly Jerusalem or city of the living God, we come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant or testament. As

Moses was the mediator of the Sinai covenant to the carnal Israelites; for they could not endure the words spoken to them, and prayed that God would speak to Moses, and through him unto them, thus making him a mediator between God and them in the dispensation of the fiery law, so in the new covenant with the spiritual Israel Christ is the Mediator, and all the saints come to him. A mediator is one who mediates between two parties and is qualified to equally represent both; equally allied, related and interested. So Christ as the Son of God on the one part, and as Head over all things to the church, which is his body, on the other, is the only divinely recognized Mediator or Daysman between God and men. “No man can come unto the Father but by me.” As there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time. We have not time or space here to treat at large upon the mediatorial glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we will briefly speak of him as the Mediator of the new covenant, as it is through his mediation this covenant of life and peace exists, is made, ratified, and ordered in all things and sure. By his mediation for his people the provisions and requisitions of the old covenant are met and canceled, and taken out of the way; for “He taketh away the first that he may establish the second (Hebrews 10:9).” His canceling of the old covenant annulled our marriage with Moses, that by the new covenant we might be lawfully married to Christ our risen Savior, who as the Head and Husband of his church is fully qualified to fulfill all the provisions of the new covenant to the honor of his Father, and perfect safety and salvation of his church. This covenant is in him, through him, and by him. He is the Surety of it, and as Mediator of it stands responsible for the fulfillment of all its promises. “I will be their God, and they shall be my people; I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more.” Indeed, all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him

Amen, to the glory of God by us. It is in him, through him, and by him as our Mediator that Jehovah is our God, and certainly it is only through him that we are redeemed unto God and recognized as his peculiar people. Through no other mediation is it possible that God should be merciful to our unrighteousness; there was no mercy in the law. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy," and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; but in the provisions of the new covenant under the mediation of the Son of God, "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other (Psalm 85:10)." His mediatorial fullness covers and embraces all his official relations to his people as Prophet, Priest and King; Shepherd, Bishop, Elder Brother, Husband, Head, Father, Way, Truth and Life; Leader, Ruler, Savior and Judge. We are not come to Moses to mediate for us, nor to Aaron, nor are we left to the mediation of men, or to attempt the work for ourselves. From all these we are come away, and are come to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

"*And to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel."* Answering to the figures of the ceremonial law. "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinided both the book and all the people saying, This is the blood of the testament (or covenant, which means the same), which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission (Hebrews 9:19-22)." "But Christ being come an High Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having

obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the Mediator of the new testament (Hebrews 9:11-15).” Thus in coming to Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant, we come to the blood of sprinkling, which being the blood of atonement, by which we are purged from dead works and purified from all defilement, it speaketh better things than that of Abel. The voice of Abel’s blood which had been shed by the fratricidal hands of Cain, called from the ground for righteous retribution upon the murderer. But the blood of Christ speaketh better things. It speaks of atonement, of pardon, peace, reconciliation, redemption, cleansing, purification and justification; yea, and of victory through the blood of the Lamb. Thus speaketh the blood of spriniding to which the saints have come. “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace be multiplied (I Peter 1:2).” “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water (Hebrews 10:22).” The sprinkling of the blood of victims sacrificed under the law, upon the books and the people, was to consecrate them ceremonially to the Lord. And the sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb upon the lintel and door-posts of the dwellings of the Hebrews was to them a peaceful assurance of their redemption and deliverance from wrath. The destroying angel had no power to smite them. Even so the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all guilt, and saves from all wrath.

From all these considerations the apostle urges his solemn admonition, “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.” If indeed we are come to mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to all these gospel privileges, we should endeavor to walk worthy of the high vocation wherewith we are called.

Middletown, N.Y., August 15, 1864.
Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 6
Pages 76 - 83

HEBREWS 12:25-29

"See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For *if* they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, sigmfieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire."

In the preceding context the inspired writer has spoken of the terribly grand display of the majesty of God in the dispensation of his fiery law from the summit of that mount which might be touched and that burned with fire, and blackness, and tempest, and the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words; which words they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more; for they could not endure that which was commanded. On that most fearful occasion the tribes of Israel, filled with consternation, heard the voice of words which shook the earth with terror and amazement, which caused the mountains to skip like rams, and the hills like lambs. Although that fiery law applied to the fleshly tribes, and the shuddering earth, the leaping mountains and skipping hills were emblematic of the legal dispensation, the worldly sanctuary and carnal, or fleshly ordinances, in striking contrast with the heavenly Jerusalem, the gospel state of the church in her present organization, yet the promise is given that as the former, so shall the latter also be shaken. That voice which then convulsed the earth shall also shake the

heavens, and so terribly as to remove from the church whatever can be shaken, allowing nothing to remain that is not immovable.

As the carnal Israelites in the type, by their frequent unlawful affinity with the nations round about them, became corrupted from time to time so as to require the judgments of God for their purification, so the church of Christ has from time to time been infested with “strange children” who have brought in with them “divers and strange doctrines,” which have required the shaking of the heaven or church for their removal. “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (II Peter 2:1,2).” And the apostle Paul is also the bearer of a special message to the church of God on the same subject; he says, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; (I Timothy 4:1-2).” “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come (II Timothy 3:1).” From these, with many other warnings, we are admonished to look for the fulfillment of these predictions in these last days. And truly the developments of the present times afford most unquestionable demonstration of the perfect accuracy of the predictions. While the various departments of anti-christ are swiftly hurrying on to their doom, being suffered to fill up the cup of their abominations, the church of Christ is invaded by men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who have crept in unawares, who come not but to kill, and to steal and to destroy. But although all these predictions must be fulfilled in all their jots and tittles, it is nevertheless true that every

plant that our Heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. All who come without grace into connection with the church of Christ shall be cast out without favor. For the fulfillment of the scriptures, for the trial of the faith and patience of the saints, and for the greater display of the righteous judgments of the Lord, God shall choose the delusions of his adversaries, and suffer them to mature their plans, promulgate their doctrines, and perplex his saints, only however until the appointed hour of judgment; for in due time his voice which once shook the earth shall shake heaven also. Also it seems to express the idea that it shall be in like manner as when in audible words his voice shook the earth in the thunder tones in which the precepts of his fiery law were uttered from Mount Sinai. But however this may be, we are perfectly confident that the shaking of heaven, as witnessed at this present time, is occasioned by the voice of God in the Scriptures.

At this very moment there is evidently an unusual agitation and stirring up of the passions and fears of nominal professors and graceless hypocrites who have had a name to live while they are dead, and a form of godliness while they deny the power thereof. “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? (Isaiah 33:14).” “There is a voice of the howling of the shepherds; for their glory is spoiled: a voice of the roaring of young lions; for the pride of Jordan is spoiled (Zechariah 11:3).”

Their consternation is most unmistakably occasioned by the voice of him whose voice shall shake the heavens. But it is the power and majesty of his voice in the written word. Scriptures which uncover their deceptive doctrines and drag forth to the light their base hypocrisy are falling like bolts of wrath from heaven upon them. The ministers of Christ are

led by the spirit of truth to open the batteries of heaven upon the hidden things of dishonesty. Their craft being exposed makes them desperate, and in their desperation they vent their malice against those who faithfully declare what God the Lord hath spoken. The church which is called heaven in our subject, is necessarily shaken by the conflict of truth against error; and the children of the latter, with all their inventions, doctrines, plans, merchandise and appliances are being shaken out of their concealment. All doctrines antagonistic to that of the truth, however cherished, must be exposed, and nothing suffered to remain in Zion which the truth of God condemns. This word, "Yet once more," has an awful significance, for it signifies the removing of those things that are, or that may, or can be shaken. Nothing that the voice of God, as sounding in his word will shake, shall be suffered to remain in the immovable kingdom of our Lord. The things of the kingdom of Christ which God has established are immovable. His word will never shake, disturb or displace them. They are not things which are made, but things which are eternal. But every thing that is made, all things of time, of earthly origin, must and shall be removed, and the heaven shall be sufficiently agitated and shaken to eject from her sacred precincts whatever can be shaken. The legitimate elements of which the kingdom of Christ is composed are immutably established. Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed; not one of her cords shall ever be broken. The subjects of this kingdom can never be separated from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, by angels, life, death, principalities, powers, things present or to come, height, depth, nor any other creature. The King is immovably seated. His throne is for ever and ever; his sceptre is a right sceptre; his kingdom is everlasting, and his dominion has no end. His laws are right, and will admit of no amendment, improvement nor abolition. The ordinances of his kingdom are as the ordinances of the throne of God himself. The foundation of this kingdom stands sure and

steadfast; the gates of hell cannot prevail against it. The doctrine of this kingdom is the doctrine of God, that cannot change. There is nothing that properly belongs to this kingdom that can be shaken or changed. None of the things of earth could move the apostles, nor shall they be able to move or shake the everlasting purpose and grace of God, or pluck out of the hands of our Redeemer one of those whom the Father has given to him.

Wherefore, we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved. Such a kingdom it is the Father's good pleasure to give to his saints. It is not of this world, or its subjects would fight. It is not of this world, therefore its subjects will not fight with carnal weapons. Receiving this kingdom, we do not need materials out of which to organize a kingdom, nor power to defend it, nor wisdom to improve it, nor ornaments to beautify it, but "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably." This is all we need, and this our God will abundantly supply; for "he will give grace and glory." And as it is only by grace we are saved, so it is by grace alone that we can serve our God and King acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness (Malachi 3:3)."

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 265 - 268

HEIRSHIP AND ETERNAL, VITAL UNION.

In reading an article in the *Gospel Messenger* for October, 1879, written by our esteemed brother, Elder T.J. Bazemore, one of the editors and publishers of that periodical, we are led to believe that he has misapprehended the views which are entertained by us, and by those generally who hold the doctrine of the eternal, vital union of Christ and the church, and also of the true basis of the heirship of the sons of God. We do not design to inaugurate a controversy or unpleasant discussion; for widely as we may seem to disagree in our understanding of these subjects, we feel confident that a calm, dispassionate investigation will obviate our seeming discrepance of views.

If we had not on former occasions fully expressed our convictions on these two cardinal points of the doctrine of Christ, we would feel more hesitancy in entering upon a discussion of the subjects involved; but having frequently presented our views, which we presume brother Bazemore is aware of, we feel called upon to either retract or establish what we have stated, or at least to labor for a more full and clear understanding of each other. Let nothing however that we may write be construed so as to indicate any unfriendly feeling towards the publishers of the *Messenger*, both of whom we highly esteem and respect.

First. The heirship of the sons of God we have held to be exclusively founded upon their sonship in Christ Jesus, as made known to them by their spiritual birth, in which they receive, not the adoption, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba, Father, [Rom.8:15;] for in verse 23 of the same chapter we are told that "we who have received the first fruits of the spirit groan within ourselves, waiting for the

adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body." And in Eph.1:13,14, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, [or were born again,] ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." In this first chapter to the Ephesians the apostle speaks of our being predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself; and in the tenth verse he says, "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him; in whom also we have received an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted &c." The reception of this spirit, by the new birth, is the earnest or certain assurance that the purchased possession [the people redeemed from the family of mankind, which is all the purchased possession of Christ that we have any knowledge of] shall be ultimately disrobed of mortality, and clothed with immortality, after they shall have been changed and fashioned like the glorious body of their risen and glorified Lord. For this adoption we are now waiting and groaning, but for it we are now sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

If then we have rightly understood the Scriptures on the relationship of sons, that sonship develops a vital relationship to a parent in whom our spiritual vitality existed before it was made manifest by a birth. A birth is not the origin of life, either spiritual or natural; it is the bringing forth a life which existed in the parent before the birth. If life did not exist antecedently to the birth, it never could exist subsequently to the birth.

The apostle says, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” And, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” The heirship is thus made to depend on the vital relationship of children; and as the heirship is a joint heirship with Christ, so also must the relationship on which the heirship is predicated be a joint relationship with Christ, for he himself is the life of all who are joint heirs with him. For the life of all the saints is hid with Christ in God. “When Christ who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” Col.1:3,4. If then our spiritual life, sonship, and joint heirship is so identified with Christ, as the only begotten of the Father, that our life is hid with Christ in God, it is based on what we call ETERNAL, vital union, and not on the birth either of our flesh or spirit, which develops, but does not originate, the relationship and consequent joint heirship.

But brother Bazemore says, “There is a doctrine called eternal, vital union, which is in our view a strange and unscriptural doctrine;” and asks, “How can there be a *vital* union between the living and the dead? How can there be a *vital* union between that which is, and that which is not? In a state of nature the sinner is dead in sin, without eternal life, without spiritual vitality or motion; and how, then, can there be any actual, vital union between him and Christ while he is in that state of death and sin? Christ is life, a quickening Spirit; and how can there be any vital union between him and the sinner, while the sinner is dead in sin?”

We have never understood our brethren who hold and content for the scriptural doctrine of eternal, vital union, to hold that this sacred union of life was given to the children of God in the earthly Adam, nor that it eternally united the two natures of which the children of God are partakers while in

the flesh, for neither before, nor after the new birth do we find any union, harmony or agreement between the flesh and the spirit, of which two natures they are partakers; for these are contrary the one to the other, causing a continual warfare in them until their final change shall come, or until death shall be swallowed up of life - until God shall change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious body of our risen Lord.

We shall not be likely to differ on the simple signification of the words - eternal, vital union. That which had its origin in God the Father, and was given to the body and members of Christ before the world began, must be eternal; and that which the inspired word of God calls eternal life, must be vital; and that which joins in indissoluble relationship the Head and body of the church of God, we call union. Can this be what our esteemed brother calls philosophy and vain deceit, and of which he warns the saints to beware? Is this doctrine taught in the Bible, and by the spirit of divine inspiration, or is it only after the traditions of men, and after the rudiments of the world? Let us see. The apostle Paul says, “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life.” [Not through the earthly Adam, but] “through Jesus Christ our Lord.” When did God give us this eternal life? Rom.6:23. If eternal life is a spiritual blessing, it was given us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [not in Adam,] according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. Eph.1:3,4. The most solemnly attested record which the Bible contains, which is borne in heaven by the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, and witnessed in earth by the Spirit, the water and the blood, which all agree in one, is summed up by the inspired apostle John in these emphatic words, “And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him

that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I John 5:7,8,11,12,20.

We learn then that the life which was given to the saints as members of the body of Christ, was with and proceeded from God the Father, and was given to them in Christ by the Father, and is, in the unrestricted meaning of the word, absolutely *eternal life*; not only everlasting, but eternal, without beginning or ending, not created, but begotten of God the Father, and given to all the sons of God in Christ before the foundation of the world, and they all, in their spiritual relation to God in Christ, were sanctified or set apart by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately called by him; "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.

Some of our brethren have admitted that all this was true in *purpose*, but was not *actually* done in eternity, before the world began; but when God has said that all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places were given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, it seems to us presumptuous to deny that this unspeakable gift involved an act or action of God. We hold that the gift was actually given us in Christ, and safely secured to us in him, just exactly as God has stated it in the words of inspired truth. Christ himself is the life - the eternal life of all his members, and God did actually love them with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness does he draw them; and no man can come unto Christ except the Father which sent him draw them.

Now let us inquire whether this eternal life or vitality which God has given us in Christ Jesus actually unites Christ, the

Head, and his church, the body of Christ; and whether it is an eternal, or only a time union. We do not ask whether this vital union was manifested and experienced by any of us here in the flesh before the world began, for that is not claimed by any. Our life which was given us in the earthly Adam is not that life which is begotten of God, and given us in Christ Jesus before the world began; for if it was, then all mankind would be the children and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. But all the children of God are children and heirs of God by virtue of being begotten of the eternal Father, and recipients of eternal life in Christ Jesus from everlasting. And of them, as the children of God in Christ, it is said, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he [Christ] also himself likewise took part of the same." - Heb.2:14. It was not their partaking of flesh and blood that constituted them children of God, any more than it was Christ's "*also likewise* [or in like manner] *partaking of the same"* that constituted him the Son of God. He was as perfectly the Son of God before he partook of flesh and blood, as he was after his assumption of flesh and blood; but his being made flesh, made of a woman, and made under the law, made him manifest as the Son of man, of the seed of David, after the flesh. As his Sonship of the Father was in no sense changed by his partaking of flesh and blood, so neither was the spiritual relationship of his members changed by their partaking of flesh and blood. But his coming in the flesh of which his children are partakers, brought him under the law which they in their earthly nature had transgressed. And thus we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, taking on him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; not to make him the Son of God, for that he had always been; but as his children in their earthly nature had sinned in the flesh, he took their nature on him, that he might suffer in the flesh, and under the law which they had transgressed, and redeem

them unto God by the sacrifice of himself, and rise again from the dead for their justification.

Now, we ask brother Bazemore, if the law of God could have recognized in the blessed Jesus the right to redeem them from its stern, but just demands, if they were not his property before they sinned and fell in the earthly Adam?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and life of his body, the church, is called the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth … and of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." John 1:14,16. In this chapter John testifies concerning him; "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men." And the same inspired apostle, as we have already shown, in his first epistle, first and fifth chapters, declares that this life which was and is in him, was with the Father, and was manifested, and that God hath given us [his children] eternal life, and this life which God hath given us is in his Son. Let this testimony be admitted, and we think no God-fearing man will deny that this eternal life is eternal vitality, or that this life is a unit. It is one undivided and indivisible life in its nature, because it is hid with Christ in God; and although it extends from the Head of the church to all the members, permeating the entire mystical body of Christ, it cannot be separated from him. For he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life; consequently it is the unity of Christ the Head with the church as his body, and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. This union of life in Christ Jesus is what we understand our brethren to mean by the words - eternal, vital union; and if it is not so taught in the Scriptures, and in the experience of the saints, we confess that we have read our Bible for almost four score years to

but little, if any profit. If it be only philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, then we have long rested upon a fallacious hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.

We are not contending for an eternal, or even a time union, between the flesh and spirit of the children of God and heirs of glory, for such a union has not yet taken place in us. We find no harmony between our flesh and that spirit which we hope and trust we received when we were born of the Spirit; but from that hour when Christ, who is our life, was revealed in us, we have felt most painfully and continuously the warring of our flesh against the spirit, and a law in our members warring against the law of our mind, bringing us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members.

But can this doctrine of vital union of the Head and body of the church, which we have so sweetly enjoyed so many years, now that we are about to lay off our mortal tabernacle, be but a delusive phantom? Have we in melody of heart, in joyful and melting strains, joined with the poet in the delightful theme of his songs;

"Twixt Jesus and the chosen race,
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Can ne'er dissolve or rend in twain."

Or,

"In union with the Lamb;
From condemnation free,
The saints from everlasting were,
And shall forever be.

In cov'nant from of old,
The sons of God they were;
The feeblest lamb in Jesus' fold,
Was bless'd in Jesus there.

Its bonds shall never break,
Tho' earth's old columns bow;
The strong, the tempted, and the weak,
Are one in Jesus now."

And this oneness of vital relationship is in Jesus, not in the earthly nature, which has yet to be changed, and fashioned like Christ's glorious body. Adam, we are told, [Rom.5:14,] is the figure of him that was to come. And if there had not been a union of natural life extending to his posterity, his transgression could not have involved them in the condemnation and death that by his offense passed upon all of his undeveloped race. "Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; EVEN SO by the righteousness of One, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." As in Adam, who is the figure of Christ, God made of one blood [or life] all the nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, &c., [Acts 22:26,] so that eternal life which is begotten and born of God, which was given to the heirs of God in Christ their Head, is one life - a unit, and not a plurality of lives. It was given to them in the Son of God, as the same eternal life which was with the Father, and is the same in all the members of the body of Christ. It is in Christ, and it *is* Christ. He says, "I am the resurrection and the life." John 11:25. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Gal.2:20. "For me to live is Christ,

and to die is gain." Phil.1:21. "Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Col.3:2-4.

These scriptures, if we rightly understand them, prove two important propositions; first, that our life which is in Christ Jesus is eternal life, or vitality; and secondly, that this eternal life, being in Christ as the Son of God, and with him hid in God from everlasting, is a unit of life; and Christ, who is our life, although living in all his members, is not divided. As there is but one Head of the church, so there is but one body belonging to that one Head. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Eph.4:4-6. The apostle speaks of those who would beguile the saints, by "not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Col.2:19.

Our natural life, on which death has passed by reason of sin, was given us in that Adam which is of the earth, earthy; but our spiritual - eternal life was given to us and securely preserved for us in that Adam which is the Lord from heaven. Our natural or earthly life began when man became a living soul; but our life which is in Christ Jesus is as ancient as eternity, for it is eternal life, and has its origin in God. Therefore that life which is born of the flesh is born of corruptible seed, and is mortal. But they who are the subjects of regeneration and the new birth, are born of God, of an incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and they are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." And, "Now are they the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what

they shall be; but we know that when he [Christ] shall appear they shall be like him;" for God has predestinated those whom he did foreknow to be conformed to the image of his dear Son, that he may be the first-born among many brethren. I John 3:2; Rom.8:29. In the vital unity of this eternal life, between the Head and body of the church, Christ is not ashamed to call his members brethren; for in his Mediatorial relation to them he claims them as his body, his flesh, and his bones.

"Hail, sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace! How sweet the song!
That worms of earth should ever be,
One with incarnate Deity."

Again we will assure brother Bazemore, that notwithstanding the seeming difference in our views on the doctrine of the eternal, vital union of Christ and his body, the church, and the basis of the heirship of the saints, we esteem him as a beloved brother in Christ; and we have read many of his articles in the *Gospel Messenger* for the year past with pleasure, and this is the first we have noticed from his able pen from which we seriously dissent. And we hope and believe that on more mature consideration of the subject, he will greatly modify the doom to which he has [we think unintentionally] consigned us, together with a very large majority of the Old School or Primitive Baptists of our acquaintance, who hold the doctrine of eternal, vital union as the very foundation of our hope of that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which cannot fade away.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Signs of the Times
November 1, 1879 Vol 48.

HISTORY OF MODERN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS FALSELY CALLED BENEVOLENT.

A BROTHER at the West has called on us once and again to give a statement of the origin, rise and progress of the popular modern religious institutions which have divided the Baptist denomination throughout our country, together with our objections to them. If our time and ability were equal to such an undertaking, our brother must be aware that a large volume would be required to contain so extensive a work.

The institutions claiming to be religious are very numerous; among them will be found the American Bible Society, American and Foreign Bible Society, Foreign and Domestic Missionary Society, American, Baptist and other Tract Societies, Infant, Bible Class, Sabbath and Theological Schools, Religious Education Societies of various names, and under the patronage of as many organized denominations, a number of different kinds of Temperance Societies, Abolition Societies, Dorcas Societies, Penny Societies, Mite Societies, and societies to manufacture dolls, pin cushions and fancy articles for Religious Fairs, &c., &c., &c. Now to trace each of the above catalogue to its origin, and give its distinct history, would be a task of no ordinary magnitude, and, so far as we can discover, of no more real consequence than the animated discussion now going on in reference to the origin of his Satanic majesty, the present prince of darkness. That such an enemy to God and the church does exist, we have sufficient demonstration, if we are as familiar with his devices as were the primitive saints; and that the dark catalogue mentioned does also exist, none, that we are aware of, will pretend to deny. The question then, with consistent bible-

loving Baptists, should be, Are they taught, required or sanctioned by the scriptures? It is of little or no consequence where they are from, if they are not found warranted by that testament which we hold as the only rule of our practice, standard of our faith and man of our counsel. In searching the sacred oracle, not one of the above named institutions can be found; and this fact has been frequently admitted by the most zealous advocates of them. They have frequently been challenged to produce one passage of scripture to sustain them; but that one passage has never yet been produced. The Old Fashioned Baptists have unitedly stood pledged to cease their opposition and fall into the ranks of those who patronize these institutions whenever a plain "Thus saith the Lord" can be found to warrant them. But this world shall wax old with years, the planets cease their revolutions, the heavens be rolled together like a scroll, and the elements of nature melt with fervent heat, before the ingenuity of man shall be able to so torture the scriptures as to wring from their blessed pages one approving expression.

When the editor of this sheet united with the Baptist Church in 1811, not one of the above institutions was known to exist in connection with or under the patronage of the Baptist denomination in the United States of America. – About twenty or twenty-five years ago some of these leading institutions began to be introduced among the Baptists of this country. The models after which they were to be fashioned were generally imported from Europe, and preceded by the heresy of Andrew Fuller. In those early days they were insinuated into Baptist favor with the utmost caution, and under a mask which they have long since thrown off. The missionary system professed only to have in view to aid those fathers in Israel who were in indigent circumstances, that they might devote themselves more exclusively to preaching the gospel. Not a hint was given that this society was to become a great national church and state monster,

demanding and receiving as it does over $100,000 annually, to be disposed of in rooting out those gifts from the church that God has bestowed for the edification of the body, and bringing in a host of hirelings who, but for this missionary fund, would plead law, dose calomel or have to work for a living.

When the gilded project of a bible society was whispered among the Baptist churches, it was only pretended that it was designed to furnish the poor with copies of the bible, without note or comment; but the hint was not given that it was to be deified and regarded as a savior of millions, who without it would be for ever lost. The bible societies (for they are now divided and become plural) are a link in the connection of mammoth institutions for uniting the church and state, for monopolizing power and wealth in the hands of an aspiring clergy, and, what is worse than all, for superseding the blood of Christ, the grace of God, the work of the Holy Spirit and faith of God’s elect.

We were residing in the city of New York when Sabbath Schools began to find a place among the Baptist churches of that city, and when we expressed our misgivings as to what they might result in, we were met by the solemn protestation of every Baptist dabbler in them in the bounds of the city, that they did not contemplate the religious instruction of any, that the design was only to collect from the haunts of vice and from the streets those poor neglected children who had no other opportunity to acquire an education, and give them, as far as practicable, an English education. We do make the assertion, without the fear of contradiction, that there was not a Baptist to be found in the city of New York twenty-five years ago, that would admit he believed the religion of Jesus Christ could be taught as a science to unregenerate children or adults in Sabbath or theological schools. But we have lived to realize all that we then feared would result from Sabbath

Schools. We have seen the children of these Sunday Schools paraded through the principal streets of New York in martial style, with the "minister of the gospel" [what a burlesque upon the sacred name!] at their head, and his male and female subalterns in charge of their respective platoons and files; and to hear it announced from pulpit and press, by governors [address of Governor Seward on L. I.] as well as parsons, that on these schools the future destiny of our country depends, that these are the nursery of the church of God and the bulwarks of our national liberty, that by these our presidential seat shall be filled with pious occupants, and no more *disgraced* [this very term has been used] with non-professing men, [like Washington, Jefferson and others of like character.] Sunday School pupils have been trained to sign petitions praying the national and state legislatures to interfere in matters of religion, as in the case of stopping the transportation of the mail on Sunday, the abolition of slavery as an anti-religious practice, for preventing the plying of steamers, regulating licenses for the sale of spirits, &c., &c. We might greatly enlarge on the characteristics of this horn of the image of the apocalyptic beast, but our space forbids.

That religious schools existed in earlier ages of the church, and in connection with what was called the church, for the purpose of teaching religion to children, and for preparing young men for the ministry, and that these schools have been patronized by kings and emperors of the earth, we readily admit; but that these very schools have in all cases exerted an influence prejudicial to the simplicity of the gospel, and ruinous to the liberties of mankind; that they have opened the floodgates of heresy, and nurtured and brought into being the papal beast, with its infernal inquisition, horrid tortures, racks and dungeons; that it has lit up the fires of martyrdom, and drenched the earth with rivers of human gore, we challenge any to deny. And are we now to be gravely referred to the school at Alexandria, or

other institutions of the kind, as a precedent worthy of imitation by our churches and associations, instead of regarding the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ as the only infallible guide and directory to the Baptist Church ~ May heaven prevent!

The following table, from Stocton's *Christian World;* showing the time at which the various bible societies have originated, from the most ancient to the present time, together with the number of copies issued to 1841, may be interesting to some of our readers, and gratifying to our correspondent, who will also therefrom perceive the impracticability of giving a detailed history of the numerous brood of institutions concerning which he inquires:

EUROPE.		
British & Foreign Bible Society, England,	*Instituted.*	*Bible & Test.*
Basle,	1804,	9,751,792
Zurich,	1804,	189,470
Chur,	1812,	14,216
Schaffhausen,	1813,	12,267
St. Gall,	1813,	7,193
Aargoviau,	1813,	30,558
Berne	1815,	13,802
Lausanne,		40,841
Neufchatel,	1814,	32,000
Geneva,	1816,	6,430
Waldenses, at LaTour,	1814,	36,651
Glarus,	1816,	3,328
Wurtemberg, at Stuttgardt,	1819,	5,000
Grand Duchy of Baden,	1812,	283,961
Strasburg,	1820,	18,193

Hesse Darmstadt,	1815,	25,300
Hanan,	1817,	31,184
Marburg,	1818,	3,316
Hesse Cassel,	1825,	1,354
Frankfort,	1818,	18,948
Waldeck and Pyrmont,	1816,	73,565
Lippe-Detmond,	1817,	2,800
Hanover,	1816,	3,569
Bremen,	1814,	49,291
Hamburgh-Altona.	1815,	9,312
Lubeck, city of,	1814,	4,726
Eutin, for principality of Lubeck,	1814,	7,156
Lauenburgh-Ratzeburg,	1817,	4,147
Rostock,	1816,	8,692
Brunswick,	1816,	8,692
Prussian, at Berlin,	1835	
Eisenach.	1805	
Weimar,	1818,	4,938
Anhalt-Koethen,	1821,	3,773
Saxon, at Dresden,	1818,	
Coburg,	1814,	154,280
Bavarian, Prot., at Nuremberg,	1825,	
Icelandic,	1821,	56,316
Finnish, at Abo,	1815,	10,445
Russian, at St. Petersburg,	1812,	43,000
Russian Protestant,	1813,	856,105
Swedish,	1826,	27,980
Norwegian,	1809,	416,566
Danish,	1816,	16,000
Sleswig-Holstein,	1814,	142,512
Netherlands,	1815,	74,186
Brussels,		165,474

Antwerp,	1834,	
Ghent,	1834,	
Paris Protestant,	1834	
French and Foreign,	1818,	161,974
Ionian, at Corfu,	1833,	25,334
Stavanger,	1819, 1828,	7,377, 6,643
ASIA.		
Calcutta Auxiliary,	1811,	208,899
Bombay Auxiliary,	1813,	64,648
Madras Auxiliary,	1820,	177,173
Colombo Auxiliary, Ceylon,	1812,	17,437
AMERICA.		
AM. NATIONAL, at N. Y. City,	1816,	2,353,968
Philadelphia,	1808,	221,333

In the above table the parent societies only are mentioned. There are 3,100 auxiliary societies in Great Britain, and 1,000 in the United States. The English have translated the bible-into 158 languages. The missionary, tract and other religious societies are so numerous that it would be impossible to insert a list of them in this place. The earliest was the “society of Jesus,” (Jesuits) founded in 1539. The next was the congregation for the propagation of the faith, 1632; for propagating the gospel in New England, 1649; for promoting christian knowledge, 1698; London missionary, 1795.

As we have before intimated, we have neither time nor space to call the attention of our readers to each of the popular institutions of our degenerate age. It is sufficient for every

child of God and disciple of the Lamb to know that these institutions are none of them sustained by divine authority; they are therefore, at best, but human inventions, and we are solemnly admonished that God will take vengeance on the inventions of men.

The hydra headed monster has thrown its cursed fangs into the councils of our nation, and infused its poison into the sanctuary of every state. Its abominable innovations upon the christian faith and practice were introduced among the Baptists when in their embryo state, but as fast as the public mind could be prepared to favor them, they have not only multiplied, but thrown off the deceptive guise in which their master spirits introduced them. And as they have grown in years they have grown in strength; they now acknowledge no limits, they yield to no restraints; and like the green bay tree, they have spread themselves beyond the Allegany, have invaded the camp of the saints in the Mississippi Valley, and laid waste, so far as heaven would suffer them, the order, peace and harmony of the church throughout our wide spread, once happy states. With the increase of these institutions, vice and immorality of every name has also increased, and but few such reformations as these institutions have effected on the community would be required to subvert and prostrate every social, civil and religious privilege that we as disciples of Christ and as citizens of the world hold dear, and establish in their place an unlimited hierarchy of priestcraft, and inscribe indelibly, as with a pen of iron, *Ichabod,* upon the fair edifice of freedom, and on all our institutions of equal rights.

In addition to what we have written and copied, we might refer our brother to the annual reports of the self-styled benevolent institutions, together with their constitutions, &c.; but we are limited for room. Our objection to the whole of them may be summed up in a few words, and is implied in

what we have already written, viz.: that they are unwarranted by any divine authority, and that we cannot patronize them without subjecting ourselves to the reproof, “Who hath required these things at your hands?” That they are subversive of the order of the kingdom of Jesus, is demonstrated by the present scattered state of the Baptist community, in consequence of their introduction among us.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
July 1, 1842

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 31-38

HOLY ALLIANCE.

UNDER the above head, the editor of the *Repository* has informed his readers that there exists an alliance between God and his people, and that God has laid aside that power which works without means, and has devolved upon his people a course of duty, &c. This doctrine of "Holy Alliance" has been preached before. But that God has laid aside his divine omnipotence, or "that power which works without means," and has substituted in the room thereof the duty of his people or allies, is truly astonishing; but we are told that this change in the immutable God is intended for a glorious and magnificent purpose - nothing less than the conversion of the world. How astonishing! that the immutable God should at this late hour undertake the conversion of the whole world, when a portion of them are already suffering the. vengeance of eternal fire; and still more strange, that just as lie was about to commence this new enterprise he should dispense with his omnipotence, immutability and truth, laying aside the former, and violating the two latter, in order to give the mighty creature man an opportunity to help his God. This doctrine is as new as it is strange, and as strange as it is false and blasphemous. He farther tells us, that God has said to his people, "Occupy till I come; Go preach the gospel to every creature; I send you not alone, you are an ally, and lo, I am with you always; and while you are preaching and praying, my grace shall be sufficient to sustain you, and my Spirit shall give efficacy to the word of salvation." In what part of the bible, or by what manner of revelation he has collected his authority for this doctrine, he has not informed us.

The words, "occupy till I come," are a part of one of our Lord's parables. But this scripture no more implies the doctrine of "Holy Alliance," than the commission given to the.

apostles by our Lord Jesus Christ," Go preach the gospel, &c.," applies to all the people of God indiscriminately. The words, "You are an ally," and while you work, I will work, are not recorded in the volume of truth; but they have been added to the words of the prophecy of God's holy book, in all probability by him of whom it is written, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in the book. - Rev. xxii 18.

To give the appearance of proof to his theory, Mr. C. refers to a passage in the song of Deborah and Barak: "Curse ye Meroz; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." From this passage our expositor concludes that God wanted the help of Meroz; yea, that he declared plainly that he wanted their help. Now we confess: it does not appear to us quite so plain; indeed we see nothing that looks like it. True, if we were to adopt the views of Mr. C., and could persuade ourselves that God had laid aside his power, &c., we might see some propriety in his calling on man for help. Nothing can be more palpable than the perversion of this text. God has said, "Vain is the help of man." - Psa. lx. 2. And would God call for a vain thing? Again he has said, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, or maketh flesh his arm." And will God make a cursed thing his arm?

Let us consider the circumstances which led to the adoption of these words in the song of Deborah. The children of Israel had got into trouble in consequence of substituting the help of the gods of the nations around them in the place of the help of the God who had brought them up out of Egypt. They had joined themselves to the nations around them in an unlawful affinity, and had bowed themselves to strange gods, &c., but now they were in trouble; God sold them into the hand of Jaban, king of Canaan, the captain of whose host was Sisera. This king had nine hundred chariots of iron, and

twenty years he mightily oppressed them; and they cried to the Lord for help, not to assist him, as the learned Mr. C. translates it, and the Lord heard their cry, and informed them through Deborah, that he would help them, and deliver Sisera into their hands. A wide difference between this and a plain declaration that he wanted their help. If he were hungry he would not tell them, for the world is his and the fullness thereof. - Psa. 1. 12. No, reader, it was not God who was in want of help. Israel was in distress; Israel called upon the Lord, and the Lord helped them. God appointed to help them near Mount Tabor, and commanded that ten thousand men of the children of Kaplitali and Zebulun should draw near, not to help him, but to receive his help; for he said he would deliver their enemies into their hands. At length the time appointed arrives, the troops of Jabin appear, a formidable host in battle array: "And Deborah said unto Barak, Up, for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand. Is not the Lord gone out before thee? &c. And the Lord discomfitted Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his hosts. So God subdued on that day Jabin, the king of Canaan, before the children of Israel. Thus God helped Israel on that day. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." While Naphtali and Zebulun went to the help of God, *i. e.,* to receive the help of the Lord against the mighty, according to the command, there were some who dwelt in Meroz who despised the command of God; they went not up to participate in the help of the Lord; and from the bitter cursing which was heaped upon them they may well represent our *New School*neighbors. From a variety of considerations we might show the analogy.

That Moses personifies the law, is evident; compare John v. 45. with 2 Cor. iii. 15. Joshua, who succeeded Moses in the government of Israel, was a bright figure of our Lord. Jesus Christ, who has emancipated his children from the dominion of the law, and led them triumphantly through the Jordan of

christian Baptism into the gospel church, to be governed by the law of grace, and not by the law of works. When God called Joshua home to glory, he raised up judges, not to legislate, but to administer the government of Israel according to the laws already provided. Even so when Jesus our Lord ascended, when "*God went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet,* he seated judges upon twelve thrones, to judge the twelves tribes of spiritual Israel. After the (heath of Joshua, the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and hearkened not to the voice of the judges; yea, they forsook the God of their fathers, who brought them up out of Egypt. "Nevertheless the Lord raised them up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them; and yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the Lord, but *they*did not so; *they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way*." - Judges ii. 16-19. And who will dare deny that a corresponding course of rebellion and idolatry has marked the history of the New School Baptists of the present age? Do. they not bow down to gods which their fathers never knew? And do they not ascribe the power of saving souls to men, to money, to Theological and to Sabbath Schools, Tract, Mission and other Societies, which their fathers, the *Old School,* never-knew? And are not these the gods of the nations around about them? Are they not new gods in Israel, which came newly up? And do not the New School teach their pupils to go down to Egypt for help, instead of coming to the help of the Lord, which is already provided? Do they not teach that *vain is the help of God, and mighty and efficient is the help of man?* We answer, Yes, God has laid help (the help of God,) on one that is mighty, - on his dear Son. God has *devolved* on Jesus the work of saving his people from their sins, of calling them by his Spirit, of uniting them as

members of his body, of supplying them with pastors after his own heart, of qualifying his ministers to preach, his elect to hear, and of building up his church on that Rock against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. Yet the New School teach that all this is *in vain,* unless the mighty creature *man* gives it the finishing stroke; that the atoning blood of Jesus will not save the heathen without we send out our missionaries, tracts, agents, - that the help of God in supplying Zion's walls with ministers, is worth nothing, - they are an inefficient, ignorant set, - we cannot have an efficient ministry without a golden calf to prepare them; but give us your gold, silver, brass, or even paper, and we will rear colleges and seminaries, in which we will prepare pious young men for the ministry, which will answer the purpose. The New School teach men to believe that they have power to make preachers, make converts, to save a shaking world, - to usher in the millennium, or to keep it back, at pleasure, and that God wants, yea, calls for and expects the aid of man. Had the inhabitants of Meroz understood this subject as Mr. C. does, they would have turned out to a man; there is nothing that pleases the proud heart of the unregenerate so much as the idea of *helping God;* he cannot bear the thought that God shall be supreme; an independent, self-sufficient, sovereign God they hate; but such a God as Mr C. describes, they love. There is perhaps not less than one hundred instances recorded in the bible, where God is set forth as the help of his people; but if there is one solitary instance recorded in the volume of truth, of God's calling for or receiving the help of man, we have never discovered it. From the many, we will mention a few of these passages, for the consideration of those who love bible doctrine. Moses saith, "The God of my fathers was mine help."

"And this is the blessing of Judah: Hear, Lord, the voice of Judah, and be thou an help unto him from his enemies." - Deut. xxxiii. 7. "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun,

who rideth upon the heavens in thy *help*, and in his excellency on the sky." - Verse 26. "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy *help*, and who is the sword of thy excellency, and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee." - Verse 29. "And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask *help* of the Lord." - 2 Chron. xx. 4. "If God will not withdraw his anger, the *proud helpers* do stoop under him." - Job ix. 13. (Pray take notice of that last clause.) "*Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in God.*" - Psa. iii. 2. "The Lord hear thee in the day of trouble; the name of the God of Jacob defend thee. Send the *help* from the sanctuary and strengthen thee out of Zion." - Psa. xx. 1,2. "thou hast been my *help*, O god of my salvation." - Psa. xxvii. 9. "Our soul waiteth for the Lord, he is our *help* and our shield." - Psa. xxxiii. 20. "Plead my cause, O Lord, take hold of shield and buckler, stand up for my *help*." - Psa. xxxv. 1,2. "Arise for our *help*, and redeem us." - Psa. xliv. 26. "God is our refuge and strength, a very pleasant *help* in trouble." - Psa. xlvi. 1. "Give us *help*from trouble, for *vain is the help of man*." - Psa. lx. 11. "O my God, make haste for my *help*." - Psa. lxxi. 12. Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One and saidest, I have laid *help* on *one* that is mighty, I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people." - Psa. lxxxix. 19. "Unless the Lord had been my *help*, my soul had almost dwelt in silence." - Psa. xciv. 17. "O Israel, trust in the Lord, he is thy *help* and thy shield." - Psa. cxv. 9,10. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my *help;* my help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." - Psa. cxxi. 1,2. "Our *help* is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth." - Psa. cxxiv. 8. "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the sons of men, in whom there is no *help*." - Psa. cslvi. 3. "They were all ashamed of a people that could not profit them, nor be an help, nor profit, but a shame and also a reproach." Isa. xxx. 5. "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for *help*." - Isa. xxxi. 1. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed

thyself; but in me is thy *help*." - Hosea xiii. 9. See also 2 Chron. xiv. 11, xxv. 8, Psa. xii. 1, xxii. 19, xxxviii. 22, xl. 13, lxx. 1, xxxviii. 40, xlvi. 5, lix. 4, lxxix. 9, cix. 26, Isa. xxx. 7. All these scriptures, with many others equally in point, encourage us to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to *help* us in time of need." - Heb. iv. 16.

How gross must be the darkness that pervades the mind of any man who can, in the face of the above scriptures, sa.y that God wants the help of man. If God had any confidence in the help of man, would he have cursed man for trusting in man? Would he have declared once and again, "Vain is the help of man," and then call for a vain thing? We can conceive of nothing more absurd or ridiculous; unless it be contained in the concluding paragraph of Mr. C.' statement; "God wants the hearts, prayers and labors of his allies, or friends." It is very strange that God should be in want of the hearts of his people, to say nothing of his allies. If Mr. C. means the old heart of stone, with all its pollutions, it must be strange that he should be in need of such corrupt and detestable things; but if he means the new heart, or heart of flesh, he has yet to be informed that God has all such hearts in his possession already, and therefore cannot be in want of them. And as to God's being in want of prayers, we have never learned from our experience, or from the bible, that our prayers added any thing to God. We had been in the habit of believing that prayer was instituted for the special benefit of the children of God; and that for this end God pours out upon his chosen ones (not allies,) the spirit of grace and supplication; and the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which cannot be uttered. Hence God cannot be in want of our prayers; we are in want of God's protection, and his constant care; and it is our privilege, if we are his children, to pray unto him for it, None but a Pharisee

would suppose that our prayers are supplying the wants of God.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
April 10, 1833.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 49 – 58

HOME MISSIONS.

(From the Baptist Repository.)

"OF all the objects which can be presented to the christian community, none is more urgent, or mere worthy of their regard or liberality, or demands more wrestling in prayer, or greater sacrifices, than those of our Home Mission Society.

"This institution dispenses her charities to our neighbors, friends and countrymen. She offers life and pardon, through a crucified Redeemer, to the destitute of our land, to the perishing of our own nation. She holds up the lamp of divine truth to enlighten the eyes, and its holy influence to purify the hearts of a citizen of a republic, whose perpetuity under God depends upon the intelligence and morality of its individual members. With a benign and heavenly step she-marches through the western wilderness, giving tread to the hungry, strength to the weak, knowledge to the ignorant, and life to the dead; laying broad and deep a permanent foundation for the properity and happiness of the American people, and through grace divine, for the eternal salvation of thousands.

"From the claims of Burmah and other nations of the east we would not detract; rather would we augment the resources of Foreign Missions.

"We feel for the deluded worshipers of Guadama, and our prayers and alms have long been enlisted in their favor. We weep for the millions of Asia who are without God, and daily dropping into the grave of eternal misery. But whilst we feel and weep, pray and give, to rescue them from their danger, we cannot forget that thousands of our fellow-citizens, speaking our own language, members of the same community with ourselves, and at all times accessible, are

also every day falling one by one into the same awful pit of in-terminable wretchedness, without a messenger of mercy to warn them of their danger, or proclaim deliverance through. the great Redeemer. We admire the sentiment of the man who exclaimed, "The earth is my country, and every honest man my neighbor;" but we remember the God of nature has deeply implanted in the human breast love of country, home and kindred; and the God of grace directed his disciples, when he commanded them to teach all nations, to begin at Jerusalem. The sympathies of our nature, and this injunction of our Lord and Savior, alike urge American christians to supply the destitute of their own country. But these are by no means the only peculiar claims of the Home Mission.. They are numerous, urgent and powerful; but to the follow-ing considerations only would we direct the attention of your readers, viz: Upon the present support of the Home Mission will greatly depend the future enlargement of Foreign. Missions.

"The fuel to feed the heavenly flame kindled here and there in distant lands must principally be grown in these Untied States. Here must be reared the men to supply the places vacated by missionaries prematurely cut off by disease or violence. Feeble stations must be reinforced by large accessions, printing presses and printers must be greatly multiplied, numerous tribes and nations yet unknown are destitute of a knowledge of the living God, and must be supplied with the written and preached word of life. Thousands of men and millions of money should be sent abroad, because the Lord has given the command to his people "to preach the gospel to *every creature."* But how may we rationally expect God to provide the necessary men and means? Surely not by the people sowing sparingly, but most bountifully, in the field in which they are to be produced. Not by their neglecting the fountain from which

sustenance and succor are to flow, but by its speedy enlargement, and by seasonable and liberal supplies.

"And where may we reasonably expect greater accessions to the church in men and means from ministerial labor than in the great valley of the Mississippi? We may not indeed see great results from it in one year, or two, or even in ten, particularly with reference to missionary contributions; but let our old established churches faithfully and fully discharge the duty they owe to the West, let them do it without delay, and before the present generation shall have passed away we may expect to see Western christians and their gold freely consecrated to Foreign Missions. Indeed it would be less wonderful than many events which have transpired amongst men, should a Western Missionary Society be formed some forty or fifty years hence, to supply the destitution of the Eastern States. May God grant to the people of the Great Valley the disposition and ability to do it without its necessity.

"Baptists are wise too late. Had they formed our national Home Missionary Society some twenty years since, and liberally patronized it, strict economy and plain duty would alike have been consulted. Flourishing villages and cities, with their influence, would not then, as now, have been in the possession of other denominations. One amongst the most important and influential cities on the Mississippi, but a few years since was entirely in the hands of the Baptists, and with but little of the right kind of aid at that time, it would have continued so; but that little being withheld, other denominations stepped in, took the ground, and being assisted by their friends, became established, and now have flourishing and efficient societies, which are able to aid in building up others, while the Baptists are few in number, without a house, without a minister, and without influence. This is but one instance; others of a similar character might easily be named. Now who does not see that, had a few

hundred dollars been given to our denomination in that city in their time of need, that the amount thus seasonably expended would by this time have been returned to the treasury of the Lord with more than compound interest, and that a foundation would have been laid greatly advantageous to the Baptist cause for succeeding generations.

"Other cities and important towns in the Great Valley are at this very moment in the same situation as the city just alluded to when in its infancy. Should these be neglected at this important juncture, should efficient and suitable aid be now withheld, they will be lost comparatively to our denomination, and a few years hence hundreds will do less for the cause in those places than tens would now. Whereas, on the contrary, with a little trouble at this crisis, they will be placed in circumstances which will enable them to do vast good in the vicinity of their several locations, and eventually become able coadjutors in the great work of evangelizing the world.

"The effect of genuine christianity is always the same. Give to the people of the West the gospel, deeply imbue their minds with its heavenly, its diffusive spirit, and the millions of men and' the millions of money already there, and rapidly increasing, will, by the grace of God, exert a powerful influence in favor of Zion, which shall be felt in lands far remote, and which shall greatly enlarge her borders.

"R. S. T."

REMARKS.

READER, we present for your serious consideration the above article, written by 'R. S. T.," on the subject of Home Missions, which we have copied from the record of that institution. Mark the sovereign efficacy by the writer ascribed to the

sordid dust, and what God-like power he represents as vested in this two-year-old H. M. S. Although she is only in her infancy, he beholds her emerging from nonentity, and with gigantic strides pursuing her onward course, dispersing her charities, and offering life and pardon to the destitute; and with superhuman step, marching through the western wilderness, giving bread to the hungry, knowledge to the ignorant, and *life to the dead.* Laying a broad, deep and permanent foundation for the happiness and for the eternal salvation of thousands, having also in view the evangelization of the heathen, and the conversion of the world.

Such, candid reader, are the ostentatious pretensions of this engine of modern contrivance. And shall it be thought presumptuous or sacreligious for us, who are but rustics, to approach so near this magnificent Babel as to raise the curtain and let in the light of truth upon the deception which seems to enshroud in darkness, which may be felt, the minds of thousands of honest souls?

Know, then, from the declaration of the infallible word of God, that with God alone are the issues from death. Neither is there salvation in any other name or way. He has chosen and ordained his people unto salvation, through sanctification of his Spirit, (not through the amazing energies of this institution,) and a belief of the truth. Our Lord Jesus Christ in an address to the Eternal Father, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, gives us to know that the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given to him. Hence we are assured that a definite portion of the human family are given unto the Mediator, and that it is given unto him, and to him exclusively, to give unto them eternal life; that this work was assigned the Lord Jesus to perform, but few, in the face of this scripture, will have the effrontery to deny. And our Lord declares in this same chapter, that he has finished the work

which the Father gave him to do; and this declaration he repeated on the cross, with a voice at which the solid marble burst asunder, the vail of the temple was rent in twain, the sun was darkened, and the slumbering dead brought forth, in demonstration of the words of truth which he uttered with his dying breath. And do our readers still doubt the efficiency of a Savior like our Immanuel? One who is mighty and able to save unto the uttermost all who come. unto the Father by him. One in whom is vested "power over all flesh." One to whom is entrusted for this specifice object all power in heaven and on earth. And can we then for a moment question either his will or his ability to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him? No. It is impossible, if we believe the scriptures, for us to indulge the thought that the eternal destiny of any portion of the human family is suspended upon the pleasure or performance of man whose breath is in his nostrils, a creature of yesterday, who in all his flower and prime, yea, in his best estate, is altogether vanity.

Let then these scriptures be received as the testimony of God on this subject, and then enquire where is the necessity for these modern systems of mendicancy and extortion which are resorted to at this day as an instituted means of saving souls? It has been peremptorily denied that the benevolent institutions of the day, as they are called, make any pretensions to the power of saving souls, and when we accuse them of attempting anything of the kind, they call it calumny and misrepresentation, and utterly disclaim the thought.

But let us compare their declarations with their practices and writings, and be astonished at the contrast. If they do not believe that men or angels can quicken or make alive those who are dead in sin, why do they, as in the article before us, tell that the Home Mission is giving *life to the dead?* What mean they by saying that there are thousands of our fellow

citizens, at all times accessible to us, who are every day one by one falling into the same awful pit of interminable wretchedness, and representing these as having peculiar claims upon the H. M. S.? We do not deny that thousands are falling into the pit of interminable misery, but we have the sacred testimony of the holy scriptures to assure us that of all the thousands who go down to hell there is not included with them one solitary individual whom God has chosen to salvation, or for whom Jesus has shed his blood. God has given his word for it, that all the election of grace shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. Who then are these that have peculiar claims upon the Home Missions Not the elect. They have no claim on man or on God for salvation; and they rejoice in this. God has saved them, and called them with an holy calling, not according to their works,. but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. 2 Tim. i. 9. Hence the characters intended must be those who are not chosen, called, redeemed, or appointed to salvation, but .those who were of old ordained to this same condemnation. Now these being the characters, we ask what claims have even these on the H. M. for life and salvation? Now we would not do them the injustice to say that they ever presented any, or pretended to claim salvation at the hands of this institution. But still this writer seems to admit the justice and their right to claim salvation at their hands. This is indeed an important stand which he would assume for that institution - having the power to save from interminable misery even the non-elect.

"Baptists are wise too late." Ah, why? "Had they framed our national Home Mission Society some twenty years since, and liberally patronized it, &c., flourishing villages and. cities, now in the hands of other denominations, might have been, with their influence, cash, &c., in the hands of the Baptists."

God be praised for so great a salvation as that by which he has been graciously pleased to deliver us from so early an innundation of corruption, by the opening of the flood-gates to let in upon us whole villages and cities of baptized Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Universalists, Quakers, Roman Catholics, Mormons, &c. We doubt not, if the Home Mission could have sprung their net some twenty years ago, they would by this time have been in possession of a greater amount of power and influence than what at the present they can boast. A few hundred dollars! Oh, what wonders it could do in making New School Baptists; and "who does not see that had a few hundred dollars been given to our denomination, &c., in their time of need, that the amount seasonably expended would, by this time, have been returned to the treasury of the Lord, with more than compound interest, and the benefit would have resulted to succeeding generations."

Now, according to the above calculation of "R. S. T.," if the Lord had done for us what he promised, by the apostle Paul, that he would do, viz: supply our need, the Baptists would have been seasonably prepared to have made a moneymaking business of this evangelizing system, and with more than compound interest they could have refunded the amount of capital. But alas! Baptists are wise too late, and the wickedly intrepid Presbyterians, Methodists and Catholics, taking time by the foretop, reap the golden harvest, while succeeding generations are left to feel and mourn over the neglect.

But, candid reader, don't give up to despair. The writer of this article informs us there is yet a chance for us to invest our cash in this profitable stock; there are, at this very moment, other cities and important towns in the Great Valley, now in their infancy, and the Home Mission Society, even at this late hour, is willing to receive all the loose change you have to

part with, to lay it out in making the necessary arrangements for constituting these new settlements Baptist communities, and thus preparing them at some future day to come forward as able coadjutors in the great work of evangelizing the world.

The last paragraph of this article being a very remarkable one, we cannot consent to pass it entirely in silence. We grant that the effect of christianity is always the same, but it does not nor can it follow that the gospel is within the gift of the patrons of the Home Mission Society, or that mortals may attempt to imbue the minds of their fellows with its heavenly spirit, or that the spirit of it is by us to be diffused. If the views which Simon once entertained of heavenly gifts were correct, (and we can but remark the coincidence between his and the views of the writer of the above article,) what an opening would the present state of things. show for speculation. “Millions of men and millions of money!” O delightful thought! all this, by the grace of God. Just as James was king of England, Ireland, &c., would exert a powerful influence in favor of Zion. What a libel on Zion to represent that her cause may be promoted and her borders enlarged by men and money, through the contrivance of these devoted servants of mammon.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
October 8, 1834.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 173 – 181

HOSEA VI: I.

“Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up.”

The language of Ephraim and Judah in the text, implies a confession that they had departed from the Lord, and had gone into idolatry, and that the Lord in covenant faithfulness had humbled them by sore chastisement. As he had said in chapter v. 14, “For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him.” These fearful judgments had been felt, and being thus abased before the Lord, their language is, “Come, and let us return unto the Lord.” They acknowledge that the hand of the Lord had been upon them, and that he alone could heal them. In the prophetic import of the subject, Judah and Ephraim appear to represent the church of God in her gospel organization, who, like the type, manifests a strong inclination to run into idolatry, by departing from the Lord in doctrine, in practice and in the discipline and order of his house. In all such cases, God is faithful to the provisions of his covenant. He will, and he does, visit the transgressions of his children with a rod, and their iniquities with many stripes, until they feel suitably humbled, feel a contrition of heart for their follies, and a desire to return to the order of the gospel. Then their language will be like that of Judah and Ephraim, “Come, and let us return unto the Lord.” They understand that afflictions have not arisen up out of the dust, nor their troubles come upon them by chance. The Lord has torn them, and he alone can heal the breach. When churches forsake the laws and ordinances of the gospel, depart from the simplicity of the doctrine and practice which he has laid down and enjoined, they soon become torn, divided and scattered, they lose that heavenly love and unity, so far as

the sensible enjoyment of it is considered, and they are made to feel the folly of their course. With deep repentance they are then heard to say, “Come, and let us return unto the Lord,” for it is his hand that is upon us, and he alone can heal us. An assurance springs up in their heart; faith in them revived, lays hold of the new covenant promise that he will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities he will remember no more.

Middletown, N.Y.
Jan. 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 150 - 151

“HOW CAN MAN BE JUST WITH GOD?”

Job ix. 2.

OF all the considerations in which fallen man is interested, there are none of greater magnitude than that presented in the above text. Man, as a fallen sinner, cursed by the holy law, and doomed to a perpetual and eternal death by the inflexible justice of the immutable Jehovah, is deeply concerned in the investigation of this momentous subject. With rapid strides the sons of men are hurrying through this mortal state of existence, at the termination of which we are to launch into the everlasting reality of our final destiny. With earnest solicitude for the knowledge of the truth, and with ardent prayer for light from the Sun of Righteousness, whose refulgent beams alone are sufficient to illuminate our depraved, bewildered and perverted understandings, let us seriously enquire into the scriptural ground of a sinner's justification before God.

It would be a reflection on the character of the thrice holy God, to suppose that he would save a sinner in his sins, or without a complete justification, based upon a righteousness commensurate with the utmost demand of law and justice; and as we are by nature destitute of saving faith, and “he that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of Go4 abideth on him,” the question returns, How should man be just with God? That there is indeed a way the scriptures; abundantly demonstrate, and the fact is perhaps universally admitted; but the *how* presents a mystery into which the angels desire to look, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that men should entertain various opinions on this sublime subject. Had we access to all the knowledge on this.

subject of the learned and wise men of this world, it could by no means lead us into the mystery; for the sovereign God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of our race, because so it has seemed good in his sight. But blessed forever be his name, he has revealed it to babes. Therefore, while human wisdom and knowledge utterly fail, divine revelation unlocks the cabinet of the eternal world. The Lion of the tribe of Judah prevails to look upon the book, to open the seals thereof, and by his Holy Spirit to disclose the sacred contents, in which a full development of the way of a sinner's justification before God is made. Leaving all human speculations on the subject, then, to the book of revelation let us apply, and look alone to the holy oracle to settle the point which ever has, and still does, involve the professing world in conflict and disputation, viz: How should man be just with God? Here from the mouth of God may we be informed whether justification or salvation be of God or of men; whether of grace or of works; or jointly of men and of God, or by grace connected with works. Whether this mongrel system can be sustained by the bible or not, nothing can be more certain than that it is a very popular doctrine in this our day. That God is the grand or efficient cause of justification, that works are the grand or efficient means, that men are the efficient agents who employ the necessary works or means, and that grace has no more to do in the justification of a sinner than to *help* man perform his part. Under the impression that this is the plan of life and salvation, we see men setting themselves about the work in great earnest, inventing and trying many projects to move upon God to save sinners, and to induce sinners to consent to be saved, to induce God to lay aside his own, and adopt their plan; we see a number of men engage by agreement to occupy different rooms, but simultaneously to pray for some unregenerated individual on whom they have engaged to bestow their united efforts. Monthly concerts of prayer for specific objects are horns of the same beast; contrivances to

prevail on God to do the will of man. Let us not be understood to speak against prayer, or even social prayer meetings, whether monthly, weekly or otherwise; the abomination we wish to detect and expose is that of previously agreeing upon – may we say, an assault upon the throne of God – by covenanting that they will not give the matter up, until the Lord complies with their requests. Now christians are aware from revelation that they know not how to pray as they ought, but the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which they cannot utter. Hence as they know not, they cannot agree beforehand how they will pray, or for whom in particular they will supplicate the throne of, grace. When God is graciously pleased to pour out upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, then they open their mouths wide in prayer, and the Spirit indites their petitions, for the Spirit knoweth what is the mind of God, and maketh supplication for such things as God designs to bestow; even as our Lord has informed us that they who worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

To move upon the unconverted or dead sinner, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and a great variety of other machinery have been brought into requisition but with as little success as their attempts to induce the holy One to vary from his fixed purpose of grace and salvation. The entire brood that pass among men for benevolent institutions are birds of the same feather, and all respond to the popular creed before mentioned, viz: God is the cause, works are the means, men are the agents, and grace a name for nothing.

But we digress. We proposed to leave the speculations of men, and come directly to the fountain of truth, the bible, and there ask, How should man be just with God?

And first, we enquire, is justification of God or of men? Let the bible answer. “Who shall lay any thing to the charge or God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.” - Rom. viii. 33. “That he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” - Rom. iii. 26. “Moreover, whom, he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified.” - Rom. viii. 30. Here then our first. question is settled forever; it is God that justffieth. “Neither is there salvation in any other.” - Acts iv. 12.

We next enquire, Does God justify the sinner by his grace freely, or for and in consideration of their works? To the bible again. “Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.” - Rom. iii. 24. See also Titus iii. 7. Can it be possible for any one to be justified freely by the grace of God, and yet in some sense by works after all? What saith the scripture? “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and *not* by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.” - Gal. ii. 16. “For if Abraham was justified by works, he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Now to him that worketh (read this, ye workmongers) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” - Rom. iv. 2, 5. “Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.” - 2 Tim. i. 9. And again, if we could possibly make it appear consistent with scripture that a sinner could be justified by works, his salvation must in that case depend on his evil, not on his good works; for the apostle expressly declares, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but

according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." - Titus iii. 5.

But once more we enquire, May not a sinner's justification depend jointly on works and on grace? Let the bible answer. " And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." - Romans xi. 6.

Seeing, then, that justification is of God and not of men, that it is of grace and not of works, the conclusion is inevitable that all the modern schemes, plans, efforts, labors, &c., of pious or impious men, are abortive and vain, and that the only ground on which we are at liberty to hope for justification with God, is that which wholly excludes works, and is from the foundation to the top-stone exclusively of grace, which is through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the stupendous plan of grace which provides for the justification of God's elect, Christ and his people are identified in an indissoluble union. He, as their head, representative and surety, has voluntarily pledged himself in the covenant of life and peace, to present them holy and without blame before his throne at the last day. Hence all their responsibility to law and justice devolved on him; all their sins were charged to his account, and all being summed up, were laid on him. Isa. liii. 6. "And he bare them in his own body on the tree. He was delivered up (to law and justice) for their offences, and raised again for their justification." - Rom. iv. 25. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," (or set apart to him.) - Heb. x. 14. Thus, as the representative of his people, and their surety to the law, he was numbered with the transgressors, (Isa. liii. 12.) that is, law and justice viewed him in this relation as the debtor, delinquent or transgressor;

for on no other ground could justice smite the Shepherd. Zech. xiii. 7. But standing here in the law room and place of his people, his soul was poured out unto death. Isa, liii. And so having fulfilled the divine law in his life, he bore its tremendous penalty in his death, and having paid the utmost farthing, and completely and eternally cancelled all that stood against him, on his people's account, he burst the confines of the tomb, in glorious conquest over sin, death and hell, arose to live forever, and hold the keys of hell and death, and in his resurrection brought life and immortality to light, and by his knowledge justified many, having borne their iniquities. Isa. liii. 11. Thus in his resurrection from the dead, our Lord re vealed himself as the *way,* (John xiv. 6.) and the only way in which it was and is possible for man to be just with God, for he himself is "God with us." - Matt. i. 23. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit. 1 Tim. iii. 16. And inasmuch as he who had become sin for us, or who bore our sin, had cancelled the demands of justice, had risen, and was justified in the spirit, by virtue of his obedience, by his blood and righteousness as his people's representative, his people were justified with him, and in him, and by him, and through him. The relation which he bore to his people rendered it impossible that he should be justified alone; his people were justified with him. Hence, as he is God with them, they are just with him; they were crucified with him; (Gal. ii. 20.) dead with him. (Rom. vi. 8.) And as he promised the church, by the mouth of the prophet, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise," (Isa. xxvi.. 19,) they are risen with him, and in every nation they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted with him. Acts x. 35. And it is his will that all that the Father hath given him shall be with him where he is, (John xvii. 24,) and he shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied.

The great question then is answered, and the *only* way that man can be just with God is brought to light in the gospel; for vain is the help of man.

"No blood of birds, nor blood of beasts,
Nor hysop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could wash our dismal stain &way.

Jesus, my God, thy blood alone
Hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make me white as snow -
No legal works could cleanse me so."

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
February 4,1835.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 197 – 203

HOW TO MAKE DEISTS.

MAN is by nature and education a rational being; his mental powers are sufficient to comprehend natural things when presented to the eye of his understanding in a rational manner. Hence the arts and sciences of this world are taught to men of ordinary intellects, and “the children of this world become wiser in their generation than the children of light.” Examples of the truth of these words are not wanting among men devoid of grace, who have made greater advances in astronomy, mathematics, &c., than what is common among those who know the Lord experimentally. Although man, with all his acquirements, in his unregenerate state is dead in sin, and as destitute of spiritual life, light and ability as the dry bones which Ezekiel saw in his vision were of the functions of natural life, yet by education, tradition, &c., he is habituated from infancy to pay at least some regard to religion and morality. In fact man is naturally a sort of religious being; he views a moral difference between vice and virtue; he naturally inculcates the notion of rewards and punishments, and he hopes he shall eventually inherit the former, and escape the latter.

Such is the character of rational man; and in this character, even in an unregenerate state, it is not unfrequently the case that we find men who are honest in their dealings, moral in their deportment, and conscientious in their views. They have not a saving knowledge of God, but as rational beings they believe there is an eternal reality in religion; they respect the bible, and believe that it contains the infallible truth of God. Now all this is infinitely short of experimental religion; the pharisees of old and many of the present day possessed all this, but yet were destitute of a radical change of heart, and consequently of a preparation for the enjoyment of spiritual things. Although man in this state is not a believer in our

Lord Jesus Christ, in a spiritual sense, yet he is far from being a Deist, in the common acceptation of the term.

To make a Deist of such a man, we apprehend nothing further is wanting than to let loose upon him a regiment of modern religious mendicants, and when he has given all that he is able and willing towards the building of meeting-houses, supporting ministers, &c., let them present severally what they term the claims of their respective institutions. One agent solicits his money to constitute him a member or manager of the Bible Society. Treading upon his heel, another presents the Home, and the third the Foreign Mission institutions. Before they are gone, a fourth calls for his co-operation in the Tract cause, and a fifth the Sunday School Union; and while these are speaking, a sixth enters with a plea in favor of Theological Schools, for the manufacturing of more of these "greedy dogs," and the seventh solicits his aid in behalf of the Temperance Society; but he pretends to require no great sacrifice; he simply asks him, first, to pledge himself to total abstinence; second, to chop down his orchards; third, to proscribe, villify and persecute all his neighbors who will not readily patronize the same institutions, and give a little money withal to support the publications of the society, and the officers who superintend the concern. An eighth calls on him to subscribe largely to the abolition cause; a ninth to save the great valley of the Mississippi from the growing influence of Popery, and a tenth to aid McDowell & Co. in reforming the Magdalenes. All these, with an host of others equally fond of filthy lucre, pour in upon him, and with all their sophistry and cunning, tax his liberality; and when gentle words do not effect their object, threaten him with awful death-bed reflections, and the retributions of eternity, if he refuses to honor their demands; they tell him that the Lord wishes to convert the heathen and evangelize the world, and usher in the millennial glory of his

church, but cannot effect this desirable work until his exhausted treasury is by man replenished.

Let the reasonable man that we have described hear all these appeals, and the query involuntarily suggests itself to his mind, Is this the religion of the bible? Must I rob my children and my creditors of their due, and give my living up to aid in the salvation of the world? Does God require this? If he refuses, he is called an infidel, a Deist, an enemy to righteousness, and is threatened with the damnation of hell.

If, on the other hand, his pride becomes excited, he dreads the consequences of refusing to give up his money, and feels anxious to have his liberality emblazoned in the public journals of the day, and he yields to be taxed in this enormous amount, for the professed purpose of helping the Lord on with his work, he cannot be permitted to rest here; they will be repeated as long as he has one dollar in his possession. After constituting himself, with his money, a member or director, a president or vice-president in all these institutions, he is now gravely told that all he has given is worse than lost unless he will continue to give. And when he has given all, and much more, than he can reasonably spare, to the above named institutions, the screws are put on to extort what little may remain in his possession; penny, or cent societies, shirt-collar or rag-bag societies are got up, and the screws are turned, under one pretence or another, if possible, to drain him of the last shilling ho has at his command.

Add to all these schemes for fleecing the people the anniversary meetings, conventions, &c., at which new spurs are suggested, new tricks devised, new taxes levied, new agents appointed, and new burdens bound upon men’s shoulders, grievous to be borne, and then say: Is it to be wondered at that men, who are thus oppressed and robbed

by designing individuals, should seriously question the reality of religion itself? They see that the most current religion of the day is full of deception, and calculated only to raise up and dignify a religious aristocracy, beggar the people and enrich the priests, prostrate the rights of man, and eventually repeat those dreadful scenes of persecution which have in former ages drenched the world with human gore.

Is it, we inquire, strange that men of natural intellects, who can see and feel that they are oppressed by the abominable trickery of these spurious religionists of the day, and who have no spiritual light to discern the difference between this system of priestcraft and the religion of the bible, or experimental knowledge of the eternal reality and spotless purity of the sacred scriptures, should in their confusion conclude that the bible, like the box of Pandora, had produced all this train of evils, and on this conclusion thrust from them the bible, and assume the avowed ground of Deism. Instances of this kind are not rare; many men among us have been driven in this way into the wilds of skepticism, as Paine and thousands of his followers were, by the like oppressive management of graceless men and greedy priests in France and other parts of the world.

The very systems which are cried up as being calculated to save the world are a ready machine for making Deists; and although they profess to have made great progress in the salvation of souls, it is an awful truth that they have in reality made thousands of skeptics. As our bible is true, they never have, nor ever will, procure the regeneration or salvation of a single soul. They may, and do, deceive their thousands, but save them they cannot; for, “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.” - 2 Peter ii. 19.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
September 16, 1835.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 258 – 261

Hyper-Calvinists

(In 1866)

From the Christian Messenger. Hyper-Calvinists in Dundas.

A few persons in the town of Dundas and vicinity which have been excluded for a considerable period of time from the fellowship of the Regular Baptist Church m Dundas, in which they had created a great deal of trouble, and unseemly contention, while in connection with it; were on Saturday last organized by Mr. Beebe, and some other Minister of his way of thinking into a church. They arrogate to themselves the name of Old School Baptists, which is to all intents and purposes a misnomer. Having no personal acquaintance with these anti-mission and Hyper-Calvinistic people, we give the following extract from a letter recently written to the New York Chronicle.

"They hold ultra-Calvinistic views, oppose a salaried ministry, mission, Sunday-schools, temperance societies, and almost everything in vogue among Christians in this age. They call themselves "Old Fashioned Baptists," but others call them "Hard Heads" or "Hard Shells," names pretty well earned by their rigid principles."

The writer goes on to give an account of a sermon which he heard in Mr. Beebe's chapel in Middletown, Orange County, N.Y., which we should copy were it not that it would take up too much of our valuable space. The Rev. David Benedict, D.D., gives the following outline of the views and practices of these people, which will serve to give a pretty correct idea of what they advocate, and what they believe and practice.

"The anti-mission party, as near as I can learn without any exception are high or Hyper-Calvinists, and are so tenacious

of the old theory of particular atonement and have so far run the system up to seed, as to persuade themselves that the efforts of modern times are wholly needless and arminianism is the bug-bear which they profess to fear.

So liberal, anti-republican and anti-baptists, so frightfully oppressive, so tyrannical and overbearing, are the principles and measures of many of the anti-mission party relative to all the objects of benevolence as exhibited in their public documents, that if any of their members unite with any society for the promotion of the cause of benevolence or moral reform they are ipso facto, expelled from their fellowship and communion; the missionary, Bible, tract and Sunday-school, and temperance societies are specially named and generally a sweeping clause is added embracing all the "so called" benevolent institutions of the day. The prohibitions extend not only to actual membership in those bodies but to any contributions of their own personal funds, for their support. No collections for any of these objects can be made in any of the churches where they have control, nor are their members allowed to cast in their mites, when the box goes round in any neighboring congregation where they maybe present.

This I believe is a true picture of what is called the Non-Fellowshiping Resolutions of the anti-mission party."

REMARKS. - We have copied the above from a paper published in Canada West, called the "Christian Messenger", and should we judge of the character of the paper, by the misstatements and false representations of the facts in the case of the meeting at Dundas, we should question its claim to christianity. A Christian messenger, in the true and scriptural signification of the terms, will bear no messages of slander, misrepresentation or falsehood. The truly Christian messenger will publish only the good tidings of the gospel,

and proclaim, "Good will to men," and leave the work of slander and falsehood to Anti-christian Messengers. The statements copied above are untrue in almost every particular.

A correct account of the meeting at Dundas, and of the proceedings of the council, will be found in the fourteenth number of the current Volume of this paper, from which it will be seen that we did not organize the brethren at Dundas into a church, for they were already the church of Dundas, and had been for many years. But as their claim had been disputed by some who had departed from their faith, they requested us to examine their records, and other testimony in which they proved to the full satisfaction of the council, that they were precisely what they were originally constituted, "The Particular Baptist Church of Dundas," and that the party who had departed from their faith, had assumed another name, and adopted different articles of faith and order and now stand in connection with the Mission or New School Baptists. The council therefore, instead of organizing them into a church, found them already an organized church, and as such recognized them, and finding their faith and order as "Particular Baptists", to be substantially the same, as that which is variously called "Particular" or "Old School Baptists", in the states, expressed to them our full fellowship, and at their request set apart by solemn ordination a brother Pollard, who had been licensed by them to preach the gospel. The brethren composing the church, which the Messenger charges of being excluded persons from the fellowship of the Regular Baptist church, we found to be the church, and the party which the Messenger calls the Regular Baptist church we found to be those who had apostasized from the faith adopted at the original constitution of the church, and which they all professed to maintain until the division took place, which was occasioned by the apostasy of those who left the original doctrine and

order of the church. So much for the misrepresentation of the church at Dundas. Now in regard to the brethren who attended the meeting and formed the council, viz. Eld. Thomas P. Dudley, and Dea. James Dudley, of the Licking Association of Particular Baptists of Kentucky, Eld. John F. Johnson, of the Lebanon Association in Indiana, and Elder Gilbert Beebe of the Warwick Association of New York.

It is utterly untrue, and basely slanderous to represent these brethren, or the Old School Baptists to whom they belong, as Calvinists, or "Hyper-Calvinists," as it is well known that they have uniformly repudiated the name, the spirit, and the peculiar doctrines held by John Calvin. Mr. David Benedict had the evidence before him, of the untruth of his assertions when he fabricated the falsehood. Yet the Messenger, while acknowledging his ignorance of the people, shows his readiness to give currency to the slander, by quoting from Benedict's History, his billingsgate misrepresentations, and palming them off upon his readers, as though they were entitled to confidence.

Middletown, August 1,1855
Elder Gilbert Beebe
The Remnant
May – June 1992 (*reprinted*)

IGNORANCE OF OLD SCHOOL BAPTISTS.

WE are not unfrequently reminded by the votaries of new religious institutions, that if the Old School Baptists were more enlightened upon the subject of missionary operations, they would be less hostile to what is called the missionary cause. Although extremely modest in their pretensions to worldly wisdom and human knowledge, many of our churches have been furnished gratuitously with many sad examples of the nature and tendency of the American Home Missionary operations, and for these instructions they have been made to suffer dearly in many parts of our land. The peace, harmony and fellowship of many branches of the Redeemer's kingdom have been invaded, heresy introduced, truth turned away backward, and spiritual wickedness exalted in all high places. But of the doings of the foreign missionaries, we are dependent chiefly on their own reports for information. Many of their reports have been very flattering, have told of thousands converted from gross darkness and pagan idolatry to the more refined darkness and popular idolatry of New School religion. The plea for general co-operation in the Foreign Missionary enterprise has often been predicated on the wonderful success that they have assured us has crowned their exertions in evangelizing and converting the heathen. Lest our brethren should die in ignorance of the great things effected by human means, measures &c., we have occasionally served up to our readers a dish cooked, spiced and made ready to our hand by our benevolent friends; and that our readers may be more abundantly enlightened in regard to the prospect of the immediate evangelization of all the heathen world, we will now present them with a very luminous account of how the missionaries do things in Jamaica. The following account is written by an

American Missionary from that island, and by the *Banner and Pioneer* credited to the *Christian Reflector.* Let it be observed by the reader that the following account is now going the rounds through the New School papers, and is by them admitted as authentic:

THE LEADERSHIP SYSTEM IN JAMAICA.

DEAR BROTHER: I am aware that something is known, by the community, of the "Leadership System," practiced by the English Baptist Missions ill the Island of Jamaica, and that many desire to know the whole. I have been often importuned to lay before the public a full and candid statement of the facts in the case, as I have labored, as a missionary, in the island nearly two years, and know the truth of the matter. Until now, I have not thought it expedient for me to do so.

One reason that has prevented me from making these practices public, was, those missionaries are not directly amenable to an American tribunal, and therefore I could not perceive that much good would result from a disclosure in this country. I also feared that if the whole truth were made known about the English Baptist Missionaries, it might bring into suspicion, in some minds, at least, our devoted American Missionaries, for such I believe our missionaries to be. After considering the subject, as I trust, prayerfully, and with a desire to advance the cause of our common Lord, and after consulting with many judicious friends, I have come to the conclusion that more evil will probably result in withholding than in making it public.

In doing this, I do not charge any of the missionaries with being ungodly men. I will simply state some of their practices, and leave them to their own Master to stand or fall.

When I arrived on the island, Jan., 1840, I visited several of the missionaries and inquired of them for a place where I could be usefully stationed. After a few weeks one of them told me he had lately purchased premises in the interior of the island for a station, and he would like to have me take it and labor for him. I did so. Previously, however, to my going there, while at his house, I had an opportunity of witnessing his manner of examining candidates for baptism, which seemed to me exceedingly novel. Yet I put such implicit confidence in missionaries, that I did not dare to question his correctness.

I observed that while he was questioning the candidates, a man stood by whom he called Leader, and that when the candidate could not readily answer the questions, the leader answered for the candidate. I also observed that several who could not readily answer any of his questions, were for a time rejected. And upon their returning afterwards and telling him that they could answer the questions now, he would further interrogate them and accept them for baptism. I noticed also that no one of the candidates said anything about being born again. Nor was the question asked them. None told about their wicked hearts, but all began by saying, “Me feel well since de leader set me off.”

I went to my station quite ignorant, knowing simply that those men were called “leaders,” and that the people had some called *inquirer* and some *member* tickets; and that the people brought these tickets to the missionary every month and had them marked, and then each paid 12 ½ cents.

Being told that these tickets were used to make the people feel under obligations to support the preaching of the gospel, and also to see that they were regularly at meeting every month, I went on with the tickets myself.

After a time I found that the people understood the tickets very differently from what the missionaries did. The people supposed them to be a passport to heaven. This I first ascertained from an old man, who one Monday morning came to me early, saying, in great earnestness, “Massa Minister, me lose me ticket yesterday. Me want new ticket. Me give Massa Minister all me money.” I replied 1 would let him have a new one the next month, when I exchanged or marked them again. “O, Massa Minister, perhaps me die before then, Massa Minister, me *must* have ticket. Do, good minister.” I now began to inquire the use of tickets, and found that when one died a friend put his ticket into the coffin, so that if any one disputed his right to heaven, he had only to present his ticket and pass in. On being satisfied of this use of the tickets by conversation with different members, I was horror struck; but more so on learning that the missionaries knew that the tickets were so used.

In a little time one of my deacons brought a man to me to be “set off,” informing me that he had rather be set off by the minister than by the leader. I told him I did not know what he meant. He said I must kneel down and teach him to pray. Accordingly I knelt, and prayed that he might become a good man, and give his heart to God. When I arose from my knees, I observed the candidate did not rise. The deacon, finding that I, being an American, did not understand their religion, took the candidate by the hand and raised him up, saying, “In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I raise you to newness of life.” I asked, “Is this what you call being set off?” He replied, “Yes.” “But is this what you call being born again?” “Yes, is not this it, minister?” The reader can little imagine my feelings at this moment.

It now rushed to my mind that when I earnestly pressed upon my people the necessity of being born again, there had been much call for new “inquirer tickets.” These they have as

soon as set off by the leader. Upon further conversation with my deacon, my mind was disabused concerning this soul-destroying system which the missionaries were supporting and I had been allowing. I immediately called on the other leaders, and found by them that I was not mistaken in my fears. I saw more and more of the evils of the system. As soon as I had an opportunity I conversed with the missionaries. They all tried at first to evade my inquiries and remarks, but all as one eventually acknowledged the practice of the system, and endeavored to support it on the ground of its bringing so many within the pale of the church.

The next Lord's day after the above incidents, I preached to my people with a burdened heart. I told them plainly, and I think feelingly, that this setting off and giving tickets would never gain them admission to heaven. I endeavored to show them more clearly the nature of the new birth &c. After meeting, the chief members of the church held a long consultation, and then came to me, saying, "Massa Minister, it never do to preach so here in Jamaica. It may do to preach so in America, but it never do to preach so in Jamaica. English religion and American religion no like." I told them that the religion which I had preached was the religion of the bible - of that bible by which we must all be judged. And we could not answer for other people and other missionaries. And though all the original members of my church (375) had been members of other churches, they had never heard the like before. And they could not be convinced but that American religion was wrong and English was right.

Another objection; said they, "Massa Minister never have another baptism, if he no let the leaders set them off! That the only way tother missionaries get so many."

But I proceed to state a little more definitely the "Leadership System." Nearly every estate has a man called a leader,

generally appointed by the missionary, who conducts the meetings held by the people on his estate.

These leaders can very seldom read, yet they seem very vain of their office. The leader is held in sacred esteem by the class, and no member of the class ever meets or passes him without bowing the knee. When they salute him it is always by the title of father or papa, and he always addresses them as children. If a member can obtain the privilege, as one sometimes can, to wipe on the same napkin, sit down on the same chair or drink from the same vessel after the leader, such consider themselves as in high favor with heaven.

It is the leader's duty to induce a person to be set off when he finds one willing. Such persons are brought into the classroom and assigned to a particular seat, when after some heathenish ceremonies, the candidate is made to kneel and repeat over a short prayer which the leader puts, word by word, into his mouth. After this the leader takes him by the hand, saying, as before, "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, I raise you to newness of life." They are now termed by the missionaries "Inquirers," and receive an inquirer ticket. And both missionaries and people believe, or pretend to believe, that when a person is thus set off by the leader, he is made a new creature, or born again! After being set off, the candidate is instructed in a round of questions similar to the lectures in a masonic lodge. The leader at the first puts the question and gives the answer.

When it is supposed the candidate can answer the questions expertly, if he pleases the leader and give him sufficient money, he is taken to the missionary in these words, "Minister, here is one fit to be baptized; I give him good character." The missionary then questions him as he pleases. But here let me remark, that the missionary asks the same questions as are asked in the class meeting by the leader. If

the candidates do not answer the missionary readily, the leader who stands by answers for them. Frequently have I seen the candidate turn to the leader and ask him what to answer. After the examination the missionary enrolls their names in a book for baptism.

Sometimes when a candidate can answer but few questions, (as it often happens with old people) or when they give the wrong answers to questions, as for instance, when asked, "Who died for sinners?" The candidate will say, "At the right hand of God." Giving the answer to the question - "Where is Christ now?" The leader is required to take such aside and catechise them more. After which they return to the missionary, and if they then can answer readily, they are received.

The leader has the whole care of making christians, and I think I may say the acknowledged care. For one missionary who has baptized over 4,000, said, "I do not know that I have ever been instrumental of the conversion of a single soul. All that I have baptized were converted at the time the leader set them off."

When baptized, the white, inquirer ticket, is exchanged for a red, member ticket.

Several times when I was examining candidates for baptism, I told them I feared they never had been born again. Upon which they would go away with the leader awhile, and by-and-by return, saying, "Now, minister, me can answer the questions." On one occasion I labored more than two hours trying to convince one who had returned in this way, that if he was not a christian before, I feared he was not now. I told him he might answer all my questions and yet not be a christian. But he could seem to get no idea of what I meant. He said, "Tother minister always take them when the leader

tell them what to answer. And he spose I had some mad ‘gainst him, so I no baptize him.” My heart bled for the poor soul, and for the thousands of others going to destruction under the care I had almost said of “blind leaders of the blind.”

I never heard any of the English Baptist Missionaries, excepting three, of whom I shall speak by-and-by, ever pray that the Spirit of God would convert souls, or even in their preaching mention the necessity of such an agent. Nor do they need the Spirit, for their manner of making christians being purely mechanical, they are almost sure to have a large number to baptize twice a year. And this is as often as they generally wish for a baptism, viz.: at the first of August and at Christmas. This manner of making christians accounts for the “glorious” we so often hear from the Island of Jamaica of the triumphs of God’s grace. O, my soul, come not thou into their secret!

The missionaries have no intercourse with their people except through their leaders, unless it be to mark their tickets and raise their money; and this money very generally goes through the hands of the leader. I knew many well and. hearty members who did not visit the chapel for months, and even years, and some who never attended from the day *of* their baptism to the day of their death, and yet they were safe. They were good members; they had tickets regularly paid up through their leaders, and were therefore sure of heaven.

I was most severely reprimanded by the missionaries for visiting the people from house to house, for preaching to them on the estates on Wednesday evenings. The missionaries. said the people did not want me to meddle with their affairs at home; it was enough to preach for them on the Sabbath.

Whenever a leader is displeased with a member he “puts him back,” that is, he assigns him the delinquents’ seat, and tells him that now God has put him back, and if he dies before he is restored to favor he cannot go to heaven. In one such case the poor man, driven to desperation, ventured to come to the minister, and wringing his hands in agony, said, “Minister, what me do” If me die fore leader take me back me go to hell. What me do?”

I will not say that these missionaries feel no interest in the spiritual welfare of their people; but I will say that if they do love souls they have a very poor way of showing their love.

Aside from their schools, I can see very little to choose between their religion and practice and the basest Catholicism. Many of the missionaries receive by their tickets, as a consequence of the leadership system, over $500 per month; and by exchanging, as they call it, once in four weeks, they make thirteen months a year. For this money they make no account with the society at home. The plate of their missionaries, their equipage - their sumptuous fare, would astonish the people in this republican land. They riot on the price of the souls of their people; amid then wiping their mouths, they say, We have done no wickedness! Is this language too severe? These vast sums are given by the poor, unsuspecting people with the confident expectation of procuring an. admittance to heaven therewith. The missionaries know this. What then can I say less?

But there are three exceptions to this dark picture of the conduct of the English Baptist Missionaries in Jamaica; three who do not practice the “leadership and ticket system;” three holy, devoted men who, though they are sneered at and ridiculed by the great body of the others, (I speak advisedly) love the souls of their people and labor for their good, viz.:

Messrs. Whitehorn, Kingdom and Reid. With the latter I am most intimately acquainted. He, hearing I had found out the wickedness of the above mentioned systems, came to sympathize with me in my trials. At this time I knew not that I could call a single man on the island my friend. 1 could, therefore, in this trying scene, only go to my God and there unburden my soul.

I found Mr. Reid a truly devoted missionary, and just such a friend as I at this time needed. He informed me that on his arrival on the island he took a church of about 900 members, and that he learned sooner than I did their system of religion. He accordingly commenced an examination of the members, and found but fifteen out of nine hundred that gave evidence of a change of heart. With these fifteen he commenced a new church. The other members were offended for a time and mostly left him; but subsequently they returned to his ministry. The Lord poured out his Spirit, and some 150 were converted and made a new profession.

I was almost overwhelmed one evening after I had preached to those new converts, in hearing them express their joy at having found the right way. One after another would rise and say, "Massa Minister, leader set me off, me baptized, me think me go to heaven cause me pay ticket and carry ticket show there; me think me good, me no know me very wicked heart. Me then no know Jesus; me some talk 'bout Jesus, but me no know him. Now God show me wicked heart; me come Jesus poor sinner; me now no want leader, no want ticket carry heaven. Me go cause Jesus spill he blood for poor me. Me glad Minister Reid no take us so; me glad, me glad."

There is another practice common among the missionaries which I believe every true follower of Christ will deprecater viz.: they encourage the people to bring their infant children, not to be sprinkled, but to be blessed. The missionary takes.

the child in his arms' in the public assembly, and imparts a mysterious, holy influence, so that if the child dies in its infancy it will go to heaven. If the child lives to maturity, it will be, in consequence of this imparted holiness, a fit member for the church.

I have given but a sketch of the abominations practiced in Jamaica, but I leave the subject for the present; praying that the Lord would raise up faithful laborers to send into that inviting field.

JACOB WESTON.

NEW IPSWICH, N. H., June 3, 1842.

Oh the privations of the poor self-denying missionaries! How they love the souls of the poor heathen! Who would be so wicked as to suspect them of any other motive than that of pure benevolence I Their outfits and salaries are wrung from the hard earned savings of the starving laborers. of England, who are made to believe, as do also the deluded of our own country, that salvation of souls depends on their contributions. Their princely outfits and their extravagant salaries are but a moiety they require. The speculation in tickets and other popish impositions upon the poor, ignorant, superstitious victims to their avarice, in addition to their stipulated hire, the moderate consideration of $500, thirteen times a year; and many of them more than six thousand five-hundred dollars annually!

Mr. Weston, the missionary who tells these tales on the English Baptist Missionaries, seems shocked at the manner in which the process of setting off the converts is performed; and truly it is enough to shock even a missionary hireling. But is it, after all, more abominable, presumptuous, deceptive or blasphemous than a great part of the mummery

practiced at protracted meetings, and other Babel building gatherings under the management of the New School Baptists upon our own American soil?

What if our missionary advocates tell us that all their missionaries are not so much depraved; may not Catholics, Mormons and Pagans plead some exceptions to the general depravity among them?

Accompanying some extracts from the foregoing communication of Jacob Weston embodied in an editorial of the *Baptist Register,* together with the animadversions of the editor of that paper, brother West sends us the following remarks:

1st. Mr. Beebee [editor of the *Register]* seems almost as much astonished at the wickedness of the Baptist Missionaries in Jamaica, as Hazael did when Elisha told him of the evil which he should do to the children of Israel, when he said to the prophet, "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?" Bat as the word of the Lord from the lips of the prophet was true, to me it appears that the principle advocated by Messrs. Beebee, Weston and all their coadjutors, when reduced to its proper centre, acting systematically, will produce substantially the same operation as that which they complain so much of.

2d. Then, why should they complain of its being so exceedingly humiliating and affecting to find that there is much reason to believe that their brethren in Jamaica have got ahead of them, and have reduced their theory to a regular practice sooner than Americans? Certainly a man with poor eyes could see by common starlight, that if "Money is no less ;the nerve of missionary enterprise than of war," a man with "$500 a month," or $6,500 a year could employ "leaders" to make more converts than a poor man with only

$20 a month, or $240 a year. And the man must be blinded by the god of this world that does not see that if men's using means to convert sinners and save souls proceeds upon the same principle as raising grain, (a fundamental principle in the mission system) that not only the more money, the more men can be employed, and of course the more converts, but also that unconverted men, by using means, can raise as much and as good wheat as them that love God. And proceeding upon this principle, I see no good reason why unconverted men, or negro "leaders," cannot make as many and as good christians as missionaries.

3d. Mr. W. complains that the leaders have "The whole care of making christians." Does he think that the profligate missionaries in Jamaica could make better ones if they would attend to it themselves! Or does he think that such as himself could make would be of a superior quality? Or does the editor imagine that the protracted meeting converts in America have any more love to holiness, or partake any more of divine nature than the converts in Jamaica? I have seen no evidence to prove that the chief engineers at camp or protracted meetings &c., are not as graceless as the leaders in Jamaica, or their ancient brethren, the Pharisees.

4th. Mr. Weston complains that he "Never heard any of the English Baptist Missionaries, excepting three, ever pray that the Spirit of God would convert souls." He grants that they do not need it, because "their manner of making christians is "purely mechanical." Why then should they insult the Most High by asking him to do by his Spirit that which men can do mechanically? If the various professedly benevolent institutions, with all their numerous operations, of which money is the mainspring, are the means of making christians or multiplying the children of God, and they proceed upon the same principle as raising grain, (though it looks well to see men acknowledge their dependence upon God at all

times) there is no more necessity for asking the co-operation of the Holy Ghost to insure success, than there is for a hardened blasphemer to ask God's blessing on the labor of his hands to insure him a good crop of wheat.

5th. Mr. Weston, speaking of his trouble at not being able to make one understand what he wanted to communicate, says, "My heart bled for the poor soul, and for thousands going to destruction," &c. Had he said, Mine eyes suffused with tears, it would have looked more credent. But admitting that he told the truth, why should his heart bleed for them that were going to destruction! Did he not believe that the blood of Christ was sufficient to save and cleanse from all sin all for whom it was shed! Or would Mr. Weston give his heart's blood to save such as God had left to believe a lie that they might be damned I Of what avail could Mr. W's. heart's blood be to such as were not interested in the blood of the covenant! Could it save them or do them any good!

6th. In conclusion of the whole, there may be a latent principle in men that will, when it is properly stirred to action, lead them to perform deeds, which being previously discovered in others, appear abhorrent; and they cannot be persuaded that they have a principle in them that would do such things, though they are in the plain path leading thereto. Witness the case of Hazael, and Peter's denying his Lord.. And from my lengthy and familiar acquaintance with the principles of the whole popular mission enterprise, with its kindred institutions and their effect, I am fully satisfied that notwithstanding the glaring appearance on the face of Mr. Weston's disclosures of the conduct of the English Missionaries in Jamaica, there is nothing of it nor belonging to it but what is the genuine fruit of that system of religion that embraces the principle that men may or can use means that will increase the number of the heirs of the New Testament.

The publication in the *Register* and elsewhere may have the effect to make the public believe that the American Baptists have no fellowship with such sentiments and practice; while it is a fact that the sentiments upon which they do act lead substantially the same course.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
August 15, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 2
Pages: 44-56

THE INCARNATION OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

With a consciousness of the magnitude of the subject involved, and of our incompetency to elucidate the subject so as to remove all darkness or doubt from the contemplation of it, we propose to submit such views as we have, to the consideration of all who feel an interest in the investigation of a subject which is so profound as to excite the admiration of angels, and so boundless as to mock every human essay to comprehend its limit. The incarnation of our blessed Redeemer is, without controversy, a great mystery. “God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” - 1 Tim. iii. 16. And yet the participation of the children of God of flesh and blood, and the incarnation of the Son of God, are placed on the same ground, and based upon the same principle, by the inspired apostle in his epistle to the Hebrews ii. 14, “Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” To our mind, this text is a key to the subject, so far as we may be favored with the Spirit’s teaching to enlighten us on the subject. So far, therefore, as we can comprehend the mystery of godliness in the one case, we have an illustration of it in reference to the other. When we read that Christ is come in the flesh, that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and that he also likewise took part of the same flesh and blood of which his children are partakers, we very naturally and unavoidably infer that he had an identity and did exist as the Son of God, as the Head, Life and Immortality of his body, the church, before he partook of flesh and blood; and that his participation of the same was not to make him the Son of God, nor to make him the life and immortality of his church

(for he was their Head and Life before); but he took part of the same for the purpose which is distinctly stated in the text, namely, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. That Christ did so exist before his advent, is so fully established by Scripture testimony, that but few have the audacity to deny it. But whether denied or admitted by men, the matter is settled in the divine testimony, "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son." - Gal. iv. 4. He had a Son to send, and he was a Son before he was sent, when he was sent, and shall continue to be the Son of God after he shall have delivered up the kingdom unto the Father, and the Son, as such, shall be subject to him that hath put all things under him, that God may be all in all. (1 Cor. xv. 28.) "Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things." - Eph. iv. 9, 10.

It being established that Christ did exist, not only as God, but also as the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father, and as the first-born, and before all things, and at the appointed time, when the fullness of that time had come, he was sent forth, and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; so the doctrine of the incarnation of his children, together with that of their previous existence in him, is exemplified. They were created in him, chosen in him, preserved in him, saved and called, according to the purpose and grace which was given them in him before the world began. And all spiritual blessings (past, present, or to come, that the saints ever have, or ever will or can enjoy) were given them according as God hath chosen them in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.) Their spiritual, eternal life was given them in Christ before the world began, as their earthly, fleshly life was given them in the earthly Adam, in time. John

says, “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” - 1 John v. 11, 12.

We now pass to consider the development of these relations. These children in Christ were, in the matchless wisdom of God, destined to partake of the life of the natural Adam. This participation, however, had nothing to do in making them the children of God, any more than the incarnation of Christ had in constituting him the Son of God; for the relationship of sons or children was, as we have proved, as perfect before as subsequently to that participation. The two headships were, according to the counsel of God, to be developed. The first, in the order of time, was that Adam which is of the earth; the second, is that Adam, or seminal head, which is the Lord from heaven. The one is natural, the other is spiritual. In the creation of the earthly Adam we have the creation of all that constitutes the outward man, or earthly bodies of the children of God; and the reception by them of this earthly nature is that wherein they are made partakers of flesh and blood. This, of which they were to partake in Adam, was provided for them in his creation, marked and identified in the foreknowledge, predestination and election by which they were chosen and ordained to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the great pleasure of his will.

Viewed now in either headship, they were the chosen and peculiar people of God. And as there was a fixed period when the Son of God should take upon him the seed of Abraham, or in other words, when also himself should likewise partake of flesh and blood, so there was and is an appointed time when the spiritual, eternal life which was given to the saints shall be made manifest in them personally and individually,

and when they shall be born of the Spirit, of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which is immortal.

In the exemplification of this by the incarnation of Christ, we have to consult the inspired record. The explanation of the angel Gabriel, who was sent from God to a city of Galilee, unto the virgin Mary, is clearly in point. The inquiry of the virgin Mary embraced the mystery: How can that spiritual, eternal life which God gave his people before the world was, become identified with that natural, earthly life which he gave them in the earthly Adam? To which Gabriel replies, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." - Luke i. 35.

So, after this example, that life by which God's people were identified in Christ before all time, is implanted in those persons, by which God's chosen people were identified in the earthly Adam. The Holy Ghost comes upon them, and the power of the Highest overshadows them. The incorruptible seed, not by the agency of man, but by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever, implants in them that spiritual, eternal life which was and is hid with Christ in God, by which is given to them "power to become [manifestly] the sons of God"; and they are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." - John i. 13.

That body which Christ assumed when he was made of a woman, was a body prepared for him, and he adopted it, or in other words, took it on him, and thus became a partaker of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of; in that adopted or assumed body he suffered death, that body was laid in the grave, (but saw no corruption) was raised up from the dead, and finally ascended up into heaven, a spiritual, immortal body. And so these earthly

bodies of his saints are predestinated to the adoption of children, and have received the spirit of adoption, or implantation of the Spirit, and are sealed unto the day of redemption. Yet even we who have received the first-fruits of the Spirit (in receiving the spirit of adoption) even we ourselves do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” - Rom. viii. 11, 33; Eph. vi. 30. “Now this I say unto you, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” - 1 Cor. xv. 50. But though there is no flesh and blood heirship securing to us an incorruptible inheritance of glory, these adopted bodies from the Adamic stock shall be changed by the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead; and this spirit of adoption shall quicken the mortal bodies in the resurrection of them from the dead, and they shall put on incorruption and immortality, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

That life which is born of God requires no adoption, for it was never out of the family; it was always identified with Christ, who is our life; but that which is to be raised up from the dead, being alienated, must be made nigh, and brought by adoption into the family of God. “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. - Gal. ii. 20

As Adam is our natural life, and in him, and in all that is Adam (which includes all that is born of the flesh,) we all die, so Christ is our life, our immortality, and in him we live. “I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.” “For I know that my

Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." - Psalm xvii. 15; Job xix. 25-27; 1 John iii. 2,3.

The subject contemplated in the foregoing remarks is by no means exhausted; it is rich, boundless and glorious; it involves the ground of our hope for heaven and an incomputable inheritance. If what we have suggested shall be blessed to the edification and comfort of any of the lambs of our Redeemer's fold, we shall not have labored in vain. Let the readers compare what is written, with the divine standard. What is not sustained by the Scriptures reject; but see that ye reject not what the testimony of God sustains. And may the Lord give you understanding in all things, for the Redeemer's sake; so prays one who claims to be the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 15, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 372 - 377

INFANT SALVATION.

Elder Beebe: —Will you give your views on the subject of what is usually called Infant Salvation, or on what Bible grounds they are saved. There is much said on the subject here, but I desire to know what are your views. If I know my own heart, I am your

Well Wisher.

Reply: - The Bible, as we read and understand it, shows but one way of salvation for any of the fallen sons of Adam, and that is by and through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by him. He is the only Mediator between God and men, and independent of his mediation no sinner, young or old, can possibly be saved; for there is no other name given under heaven or among men whereby we must be saved. As it is written, "I am God, and beside me there is no Savior." God's method of saving sinners is by grace; for, "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast," etc.

Every principle and every provision involved in God's way of salvation is alike applicable to all who are saved, whether young or old. All who are saved by grace are saved from sin, death, and hell; Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance - to save that which was lost. As all have sinned, so condemnation and death have passed upon all, and none who are condemned by the righteous law of God can be delivered from sin, death and wrath, only by the blood and righteousness of him who bore their sins in his own body on the tree.

All for whom he gave himself a ransom are redeemed from the condemnation, wrath and dominion of the law, and all

such are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. By his one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified, or set apart, being sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called.

Redemption from sin, and from the curse of the law of God is not all that the gospel reveals of the grace of God in the salvation of his people; for if it were possible to remit all our sins, that alone would not make us spiritual, nor qualify us for communion and fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ. To meet the stern demands of God's eternal justice every jot and tittle of the law is required to be fulfilled, and every particle of its penalty endured and cancelled. This being fully, finally and forever accomplished by the holy life, bitter death and sufferings of him on whom the iniquities of all his people were laid, all who were thus redeemed, set free from sin, wrath and condemnation, were prepared to be partakers of the resurrection life and immortality of their risen Savior. This spiritual eternal life and immortality which was with the Father (I John 1:2), was given to those whom Christ came to redeem in him before the foundation of the world. See I John 5:11,12 and Ephesians 1:4. And this spiritual, immortal, eternal life which is hid with Christ in God is implanted in his redeemed people, and they are brought unto a personal reception and experience of it when they are quickened and born of the Spirit. Hence the indispensable necessity of our being born again; for "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Even though a man or child were redeemed from the curse of the law, yet that redeemed vessel of mercy must be quickened with spiritual life before he can see the kingdom of God, or know the things of the Spirit of God. Therefore the Savior has said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

This doctrine applies alike to all who are saved. None who are not lost can be saved. None but sinners are redeemed. None but the redeemed are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. And none others shall reign with Christ in glory.

We can make no distinction, for the Bible makes none between infants and adults.

If infants are not sinners in the eye of the divine law, they cannot die; for "the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law," for sin is the transgression of the law, and the penalty of sin provided by the law is death. All the human family were not only sinners and transgressors of the law of God from their earliest infancy, but a long time before they were born of the flesh; for we are expressly told that as soon as sin entered into the world, and death by sin, that death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned, and this was before a son or daughter of Adam had been born. If we of the present day and generation were not sinners when Christ died for us, how could our sins have been laid on him? "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life (Romans 5:8,10)." If then we were sinners and enemies to our God when Jesus bore our sins upon the cross, how can it be denied that we were conceived in sin, born in sin, and were sinners in our nature, from the time our nature became defiled with guilt in Adam? Our earthly, depraved nature *is* Adam, in us, and in it all have sinned; not only all who have been and all who are now upon the earth, but all of Adam's posterity that are yet unborn. In Adam we all sin, and in Adam we all die. Where then shall we make a discrimination in favor of infants, or any other class? Are they

not all mortal? Do they not all die? And is not death the wages of sin?

Having, as we trust, shown by irrefragible testimony that all who are capable of dying, or that are mortal, or that death has dominion over, are sinners, and that there is but one way or name given under heaven whereby sinners can be saved, we will now endeavor to relieve our Well Wisher's mind in regard to the perfect suitableness and adaptation of God's method of salvation to infants, and to all classes of men, women and children who are chosen unto salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It will be found on a careful examination of this subject that the doctrine of the gospel, as held and preached by all consistent and sound Old School or Primitive Baptists, is the only doctrine which, if true, will admit the possibility of the salvation of infants who die in infancy. Let us seeThe Mother of Harlots, and most of her daughters, hold, or profess to hold, that infants are made "members of Christ, heirs of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of God," by baptism, and that sprinkling or *rantizing* is baptism. But Christ, the Eternal Judge, whose decision is final, declares that "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and that none can enter it except they be born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. In the most heaven-daring contradiction of all divine testimony to the contrary, they assert that the children of believers (that is, believers of their unscriptural doctrines) are in their fleshly birth partakers of the faith of their parents, and have a right to baptism and membership in the pales of the church.

1. If we suppose for argument's sake that this theory were a true and faithful statement of God's method of saving infants, it would involve a necessity for a different way of salvation

for infants from that provided for adults. Whereas the God of heaven declares there is but one way.

2. It would palpably contradict the declaration of the Holy Ghost wherein it is affirmed that salvation is alone by grace, and as positively said that it is not of works. Not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God that sheweth mercy.

3. If their doctrine be true, then all infants who are not sprinkled are lost, for this theory makes works, and not grace, effectual in salvation.

4. An infant, dying with no other passport to the skies than the wet finger of a priest or prelate snapped or rubbed on its little unconscious face, according to this theory, passes into heaven, to grow up there in all the elements of a carnal, unrenewed, human nature; but as all the joys of God's right hand are purely spiritual, none who are not born of the Spirit can participate in or enjoy them.

But it is sufficient for us to know that this anti-christian theory, though a main pillar on which Babylon rests, is not only without the least particle of support in the Scriptures, but in direct contradiction of all that God has taught in his holy word upon the subject. We feel fully warranted by the sacred record which God has given to testify, in the face of all the sprinkling tribes of anti-christ, that upon this theory it is impossible for a single infant or adult to be saved.

Nor is there any other doctrine, except that alone which is held by us Old School Baptists, that can possibly save an infant.

Suppose we try the Arminian heresy, which claims that God has made provisions for the conditional salvation of everybody, but for the positive, unconditional salvation of

nobody. All, according to this theory, who will accept the terms, and comply with the conditions, shall be saved if they will hold out faithful till they get to heaven. Allowing this abominable heresy to be true, what power has the unconscious infant of an hour, a day, or even a year, to consider the propositions, comply with the terms, close in with the overtures, or strike the bargain?

Nothing can be more certain than the conclusion, if the salvation of any class is based on conditions, and the conditions are such as those to whom they are made are unable to comply with, that salvation on any such terms is impossible. To avoid this difficulty, a very large and learned portion of the Arminian Conditionalists profess to believe that although the infant cannot comply with the terms of salvation while in infancy, their parents, or sponsors in what they falsely call *baptism,* can perform the conditions for them, until they become old enough to assume the responsibility for themselves. Should parents, or god-fathers and god-mothers, fail to do what they pledge themselves to do, the contract is broken, and the infant is lost for the sins or unfaithfulness of his securities; but if they faithfully perform, and the infant is saved, his salvation is effected by his sponsors, and not by our Lord Jesus Christ. But as God himself declares that "He is God, and beside him there is no Savior," it is impossible for any infant or adult to be *saved* only by God himself.

Others there are who seeing this difficulty and wishing to avoid it, assert that Christ, in the atonement made by him, removed all original sins and therefore all infants are born pure and holy, and dying in that infant purity, go to heaven, not as sinners saved by grace, but because they are born holy, and die in a state of innocence. This theory seems so plausible that it is accepted and relied on by thousands, and this class are so wedded to their delusion that they will

denounce and charge any who deny this theory as consigning all who die in infancy to hell. But the fallacy of this doctrine is at once exposed by the undeniable fact that infants die, and death is always the evidence of sin. None but sinners can die. Because of the sinfulness of our fleshly nature, even Christians must at the appointed time lay off the earthly house of their mortal tabernacle.

We may examine all the theories of men upon the subject of infant salvation which have ever been propagated, and not one of them all can show a possibility of saving a single infant, all are not only without scriptural support, but all are in opposition to the direct testimony which God has given in the Scriptures.

After all the false charges against the Old Order of Baptists of preaching infants in hell, it will be found that the doctrine of the Old School or Primitive Baptists is the only doctrine which provides for the certain salvation of either infants or adults. The doctrine of the Bible, as held by us, is that "Salvation is of the Lord," and that "God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy." And the salvation of our God, being unconditional, and wholly of grace, is perfectly adapted to the helpless state and condition of infants, idiots, or insane persons. It is readily admitted by us that the infant is totally incapable of doing anything to procure his own salvation; and it is affirmed by us that the adult sinner is equally helpless and as powerless, and perfectly passive in his salvation, as the merest infant is. Instead of the infant being required to attain to years of maturity to assume the responsibility and meet the supposed terms, the oldest sinner must be converted and become as a little child, or he can in no case enter the kingdom of heaven.

But let it be understood that neither adults nor infants can see or enter the kingdom of God without first being "born

again." This new, spiritual birth, which is an indispensable prerequisite, and which alone can qualify any, young or old, to enter the kingdom of God, cannot be effected by the power of men. Born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God. God himself must be the author of that birth, by which we are brought into his family as sons of God. Born, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. In this spiritual birth, as in our natural birth, that which is born is passive. It can no more be produced by any power or effort of ours than our first creation could have resulted from our own wills or works. If by any effort of ours we could have produced our first or second birth, we should have been our own fathers, and not the children of God. If we are born of God, it is because, as the Scriptures testify, that, "Of his own will begat he us, by the word of his power." This is the doctrine of the new birth, as taught in the Scriptures, and how preposterous to say that an adult has more power to produce it, or that an infant has less, when if the birth be of God both old and young are perfectly passive; and if it be not of God it can bring us into no relation to God, nor secure to us any birth-right privileges in the house of God, nor make us heirs of God, nor joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ.

The notion that infants go to heaven without being born again, or on the ground of infant innocence or irresponsibility, is a contradiction of the express declaration of the Savior. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," even if it were ever so pure, it would still be flesh, and not spiritual; the infant taken to heaven, if that were possible, in its fleshly nature, would cry after fleshly enjoyments; it would still be fleshly in all its propensities, and without spiritual capacity to enjoy God, or heaven, or spiritual things. "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

As without an earthly birth we could never have seen the earth, or the things of this natural world, so without being born of the Spirit we could neither see or know the things of the Spirit. The natural man, the subject only of a natural birth, however wise, or prudent, or learned, receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. None can have spiritual discernment until they are born of the Spirit.

Infants cannot be saved merely because they die in infancy; there is no virtue in their mortality to save them. We have shown that their mortality proves conclusively that they are sinners by nature, and although they have not developed the depravity of their fleshly nature, they are nevertheless sinners. And as sinners they must be redeemed, washed, cleansed, and born again, made spiritual; and as this is the work of God, in which the subject is helpless and passive, it is perfectly adapted to the state of the helpless infant, and also to the helpless adult; and the promise of this salvation is unto you, who are quickened and pricked in your hearts, as were those at Pentecost, to whom these gracious words were spoken, "and to your children, and to all them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Whether all that die in infancy are redeemed, and born of God, and prepared for immortal glory or not, we are not prepared to say; for God has not revealed that secret to us, and we have no light on the subject, except what God has revealed in his word; but certain we are that if they are not, their living on earth a· thousand years would have no effect to change their destiny. All that the Father gave to Christ shall come to him, and shall never be cast out, whether they die in infancy or old age. Whom our God foreknew, at whatever age or condition, them he did predestinate, and call, and justify, and glorify. It was the will of the Father that

of all whom he gave to Christ, none should be lost. And he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. It is also the will of our adorable Redeemer, for he says, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," etc.

It has not pleased God to inform us whether all who die in infancy are saved, for then we might on that subject walk by sight. Nor did it please God to tell Abraham that he would certainly prevent the actual sacrifice of his darling Isaac, but kept the secret from him for the trial of his faith. How meaningless would have been the offering if Abraham had been told that an angel of deliverance should descend from heaven for the rescue of Isaac, so that the lad should not die. We are instructed by this and many other lessons to trust in God. If he calls away our infants before they are able to give us any evidence of their spiritual state, shall we murmur and distrust him? If we ourselves are reconciled to God, our faith will rather lay hold and rest upon the seal of God's foundation, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our faith must be tried by all the afflictions our Holy Father sees fit to lay upon us. It would be folly in us to think ourselves better qualified to retain our infants, or that we could do better for or by them. Having all confidence in God, and no confidence in the flesh, we should with due submission bow to his will, knowing as we do that our God doeth all things well, we cheerfully commit all to his disposal, who said, "suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Middletown, N.Y.
December 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 110 – 117

INSTRUCTORS AND FATHERS.

BROTHER BEEBE: – I will renew my request, which I made one year ago, for your views on 1 Cor. iv. 15: "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." By complying with this request you will oblige many who are inquiring after the truth, some of whom seem to be entangled with the means doctrine. It is for their sake that I make the request.

JAMES OSBURN.
Lewisville, Iowa, Jan. 1, 1866.

Amidst the numerous applications for our views on various passages of the Scriptures we had overlooked the former request of our beloved brother. Even now we may not be able to satisfy the inquirers after truth, much less stop the mouths of gainsayers who pervert the Scriptures in vainly essaying to torture them into a seeming support of their delusions, but with such ability as the Lord may give we will attempt an elucidation of the text.

By "instructors in Christ," we understand the apostle to mean those teachers in the church which are by the church looked up to for instruction, and are recognized as pastors, teachers and other gifts designed "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom

the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." – Eph. iv. 12-16. By "instructors in Christ," we must understand those who are recognized as in his body, which is his church, and of these we are told that Christ, when he ascended up on high, gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. Now all these gifts are employed for the instruction of the saints, to enlighten their understanding, that they may not only enjoy the comfort of a clear understanding of the truth, but be also protected from the sleight of men, who, like wily means-users, lie in wait to deceive the saints. Of these gifts the church of Christ may have ten thousand, or whatever number God is pleased to supply, and yet of all these there may be but few possessing the peculiar gift or qualification of fathers, as we will presently attempt to show.

If by "instructors" we may be allowed to include all the teachers who find their way into the various organized branches of the christian church, it would swell the disproportion of fathers and instructors to an inconceivable extent, especially in these "last days," wherein many "shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." "For the time will come [yea, it has already come] when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their cars from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." – 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2; 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And

through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." – 2 Peter ii. 1-3. Among this description of instructors there are no fathers to be found. "For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. – 2 Tim. iii. 6, 7. This sort has been described by our Lord as coming in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are commanded to beware of them. There are no fathers among them, no parental. regard for the welfare of the flock, for they are without even natural affections, truce-breakers (they will violate their most solemn covenants), they are false accusers. Do not forget that this is a prominent trait of the sort spoken of. Moreover, they are incontinent, however sanctimonious they may seem to be, for they are slaves to lust. It is also said of this very sort, They are fierce, like tigers howling for blood, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery are in their ways, and of the way of peace they are totally ignorant. They are despisers of those that are good. Traitors, however loyal they may profess to be to earthly powers, to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places to which they have professed allegiance, are recreant and defiant; to those into whose confidence they manage to insinuate themselves by false professions and false pretenses they are treacherous. Heady and highminded are special characteristics of this sort. They assume to know more than seven men who can render a reason, and are wise above what is written, and are of the sort to whom Job, in biting sarcasm, would say, No doubt ye are the men, and wisdom will die with you. Highminded, but not in an honorable sense, but lofty and towering in their vain imagination, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, carnal pleasures, ever ready to sell their professed Lord for less than thirty pieces of silver, and to betray him, his cause,

his truth or his people with a perfidious kiss. Yet with all these marks branded upon them, like the mark of Cain, they "have a form of godliness." The woolly coat of the sheep, to deceive the flock of God, and to conceal their abominable wickedness. But these painted hypocrites may still be known, notwithstanding their disguise, if their track, especially their back track, be closely examined. Trace these grievous wolves back to their secret lair, and you will find that many a confiding flock has been torn and scattered by them. Wherever they have been entrusted with the pastoral care of a flock, that flock has either been corrupted by them, or it has dwindled away under their instructions, and when detected in their deceitful working, and expelled from fellowship, like the devils of whom we read, when cast out, invariably tear and rend the church or body out of which they are cast, and very generally when so expelled they find some herd of swine ready to receive and hurry with them away to a swift destruction. The apostle certainly was aware that such false teachers would infest the church of God, for he found such in the churches of Galatia, and would that they were cut off, for they troubled and bewitched the saints, and he knew full well that after his departing grievous wolves would come in to the church of Ephesus, not sparing the flock, and with prophetic inspiration he gave warning of their increase in the last days, but still he could only speak of their being in Christ, so far as related to their connection nominally with the church, which is his body. They are not in Christ vitally, or experimentally, nor by having entered into his fold by the door of the sheepfold, but as having climbed up some other way, proving that instead of being fathers, they are thieves and robbers, whose work is to steal, to kill and to devour. But whether the apostle designed to include these false teachers with the ten thousand instructors in the church, whose vital relation to the body of Christ we have no right to question, who, while they have gifts which are useful for instruction,

are totally destitute of every qualification to be fathers, we will not say.

If we confine the apostle's meaning to those instructors who are divinely qualified with gifts for instructing the saints, and who are and have been useful as instructors, do we not discover many of them who lack the peculiar traits of fathers in Israel? As a prophet of the Lord, Jonah was a qualified instructor, and has given us instruction by the word of the Lord that "salvation is of the Lord," but Jonah was entirely too impatient, peevish and fretful to discharge the duties of a loving, watchful, provident and careful father. Moses was faithful as a servant, but too austere and severe to feel a fatherly tenderness for erring children. A mere instructor may impress many useful lessons on his pupils with his rod, but parental love and tenderness belong to a father, and the father feels a solicitude for the children which none but fathers can feel. Have we not known in our day preachers who seemed to be remarkably apt to teach, almost inspired to dive deep into the sublime mysteries of the gospel, very clear and sound, and edifying in their elucidation of the more obscure portions of the Scriptures, who in their every other trait of character were entirely unsuited for a pastoral relation to any particular branch of the church? Indeed, it has become proverbial of some instructors, When in the pulpit they never ought to go out, and when out they never ought to go in. Their impetuous rashness, imprudent carriage, unbecoming levity, foolish jesting, uncouth extravagance of language, cold, unsympathetic treatment of brethren, especially when under trials which require the most careful and tender treatment, carelessness in regard to the discipline -and order of the church of God, unexemplary habits, high, austere or haughty bearing, rendering themselves unapproachable to the tender, timid lambs, or the opposite extreme of low and reckless familiarity and companionship with those who scoff at sacred things. All, or any of these

faults, tend to disqualify for parental usefulness in the house of God. But few, alas, too few of us who hold a position in the ministry, or otherwise as instructors, can say in truth that our usefulness in our holy calling has not, is not, restrained by some or all of these evils. The peculiar qualifications for and characteristics of fathers in the house of God will be more fully considered in connection with what we propose to write on the last part of our text: “For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel,” which, for want of room in this number, we must defer until our next.

(To be continued.)

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Signs of the Times
Volume 84, No. 6.
March 15, 1916

INTERCESSION.

In the rich and ample variety of spiritual things which are embraced in and revealed by the gospel of the grace of God, the doctrine of Intercession is very prominently set forth as most vitally important to be understood, and implicitly relied upon by all the children of God; not only because it sustains and bears them up under all the pressing weight of trials, conflicts, temptations and tribulations to which they are exposed while here in the house of their pilgrimage, but also for their protection from the false and pernicious errors which abound in our sin-smitten world. The prevalent notion among will-worshipers and Arminians is that after the resurrection of the Savior, he ascended up into heaven, which place they regard as a locality somewhere very remote from the church, and that he there at the right hand of the Father labors continually to prevail upon the Father to lay aside his vengeful thunderbolts of wrath, and allow grace and salvation to flow down to penitent sinners. And that he is ready and willing to be employed to intercede for any sinner, however vile, who may choose to employ him to do so, and when so employed will use all the influence he has to prevail on the Father to forego his burning wrath, lay aside his purpose, and allow sinners to be saved. This theory, with but little enlargement held by papists, is so extended to include with Christ the holy virgin and departed saints, with priests and others on earth in the same intercession. The people are taught to believe that their priests and patron saints can be induced to bring an influence to bear, directly or indirectly, upon the immutable God, and prevail on him to do what he had never designed to do for them. While the various Protestant orders are very little, if any, less extravagant in making their deluded millions believe that their prayers and the prayers of their expert revivalists, at their anxious benches, or monthly concerts, can make efficient intercession

for sinners, and prevail on God himself to lay aside his purpose and adopt theirs. Hence they boastfully proclaim that prayer in their hands is a *lever* by which they can move the power that moves the world.

The positive declaration of the Scriptures of truth is that "God is of one mind, and none can turn him." That he is the Lord and he changes not. That with him there is no variation nor shadow of turning; and that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; these solemn and emphatic declarations from the throne of God in tones of peeling thunder, have no weight with them, for they do not believe what God the Lord has spoken. They fear not God, nor do they tremble at his word. Some of the modern revivalists, as they are called, and as they profess to be, have been heard to preach to sinners that Christ has been interceding a long time for them, and the Holy Ghost has as long been unsuccessfully wooing, striving and entreating them to yield their opposition and consent to be saved, but all in vain. And yet they assure them that if they will come up to their altar and be prayed for, they shall be saved; thus presumptuously and blasphemously assuming that they can do what Christ and the Holy Ghost has tried but failed to do. This delusion is greedily received by the world generally; for infatuated mortals love dearly to be deceived. We have not the faintest expectation that any thing we can write or say will make the slightest impression on them to convince them of their delusion. Our exposition may make them angry, or mad; but nothing less than the power of God can turn them from the error of their ways, as the rivers of water are turned.

Our labor is not with them, we leave them where we find them, in the hands of that God whom we trust has translated us from the power of the same darkness, into his marvelous light. Our object is to elucidate the subject of divine intercession, so far as the God of truth may enable us, to the

understanding of all who have ears to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The great object of divine intercession for the saints cannot be regarded, consistently with divine revelation, as intended to produce any change in the immutable God, in his purpose, love, grace, or any other fixed purpose or counsel of his will. To suppose that God could change, would unavoidably involve the absurdity, that such a change must either be for the better or the worse. If we say for the better, then we imply that before the change he was not absolutely perfect; if we say it is for the worse, then we take the other horn of the dilemma, and conclude that subsequently to such a change he is not as perfect as before.

Nor can we understand that there is, or ever was, the slightest disagreement between the will, design or desire of the Father and the Son. In the Godhead they are One, and in his Mediatorial Sonship, as the Head of the church, his work is not to reconcile the Father to sinners, but to reconcile us unto God. Hence in his advent to our world, he himself declares that he came by his Father's will; and that he came to do the will of the Father, and to finish the work which the Father gave him to do. And so far from any discord or discrepancy between his will and the will of his Father, it was his meat and his drink to do the will of the Father, for their will was identically the same. "And this is the will of the Father, that of all that he hath given me I should lose nothing, but raise them up at the last day." Does the will of our adorable Redeemer differ from this? Hear him. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am," etc. So far is our adorable Intercessor from desiring any change in his Father, or in his will; he has instructed all his saints to pray, saying, "Thy will be done." How could we rely on him to reconcile us unto God, if he were himself unreconciled, and desirous for a change?

So far is he from importuning the Father to save more than the Father has eternally designed to save, he says expressly that he prays not for the world, but for those whom the Father has given him out of the world, embracing precisely those of whom Paul assures us that God hath saved and called with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. And we are also told that "Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ for and in behalf of his people pertains to, and is performed under, his priestly office, and is therefore restricted to those of his priesthood, and to them exclusively. As the names of all the tribes of Israel for whom Aaron and his sons officiated, were borne upon their breastplate when they made intercession by sacrifice at the Jewish altars, so the "Great High Priest of our profession" has carried and borne all his people all the days of old, and in his one offering he was delivered for their offences, and raised from the dead for their justification. They are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people." But of the work of intercession, we may speak in a two fold sense.

First, his priestly intervention between his people and God; and secondly, that intercession which he by the indwelling of his Spirit makes unto God in them.

As their Advocate with the Father, and the Propitiation for their sins, he has met all the demands of the law and justice of God, which no other could have done, "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all

things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of his flesh, through death to present you holy and unblamable, and unreprovable in his sight (Colossians 1:20-22)." Having put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, and by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified, he has entered into heaven itself, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The Father is well pleased for his righteousness' sake, in which he has magnified and honored the divine law, and brought in everlasting righteousness for us. Now, not to overcome or obviate an unwillingness on the part of the Father, but in perfect accordance with the eternal and immutable will of the Father, as all his prayers and intercessions have always been; on our behalf, he says, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gayest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto them which thou gayest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gayest them me; and they have kept thy word, now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee; for I have given unto them the words which thou gayest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mind; and I am glorified in them (John 18:4-10)." The nature and extent of his priestly intercession is clearly expressed in Isaiah 53:10-12. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous

servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

The infallible success of his intercession rests on this, that it is always according to the will of the Father; whereas, if we were compelled to believe that his intercession was intended to overcome any opposition on the part of the Father, we should not only despair of its success, but the thought would fill our mind with horror.

But secondly, we may contemplate the intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, as carried on in the hearts of all his children. He is our High Priest, not by the law of a carnal commandment, but by the power of an endless life. "Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." The power of an endless life is the power of that immortality which is brought to light through the gospel, by his resurrection from the dead, and in this immortality all his people are made partakers; for he says, "I give unto them eternal life." And again, I am the Resurrection and the Life, the way, the truth and the life. He dwells in them, and they in him, and by his Spirit which dwells in them, he makes intercession in, as well as for, them. What would our prayers amount to, if they were not inspired by the Spirit of Christ, by which he dwells in us? "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." But, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." It is only by this Spirit we can worship God in the beauty of holiness. If left to express our desires without the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ, we would only ask for carnal or fleshly gratifications, for things to be consumed on our carnal lusts. Christians may

indeed, and sometimes do, "ask and receive not, because they ask amiss." And we would always ask amiss if the Spirit were withheld from us. "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit; because he maketh intercession for the saints, *according to the will of God* (Romans 8:26,27)." Every holy aspiration that arises from the saints of God is inspired by the Spirit of Christ in them. All their prayers and songs, their confessions, thanksgivings and supplications, uttered or unuttered, to be acceptable to God must be led, indited and directed by the spirit of our Intercessor, and then they cannot fail to be according to the will of God. This Spirit searcheth all things; even the deep things of God. And it is by this Spirit of Christ in us that God worketh in us, both to will and to do his good pleasure. How often have the children of God, in their experience, felt this unutterable groaning within them, while their lips were sealed with a death-like silence, when no language at their command could express the emotions which were felt within. Such groanings do not arise within us from any desire that the will of God should yield to our gratification; but it is rather a struggle for language to express in prayer and praise what we are feeling at the time of the blessed Spirit's work in our hearts.

It is thus by the power of an endless life our great High Priest, our risen and glorified Savior, our dear Redeemer, Advocate with the Father, and divine Intercessor, ever lives to make intercession for us, and in us. He not only lives for us, but he lives in us, and living in us, by his Spirit (for we know him no more after the flesh) carries on this intercession in all his children. "No man can come unto the Father but by me." No intercession can prevail with God, but that which he makes continually for and in the saints. Forms of prayer may

be poured forth in flowing eloquence, with fluent utterance, and may even be expressed in unobjectionable words, and yet being uttered in empty sounds, with cringing formality, are rejected by taking the sacred name of God in vain; while the heart burdened, humble sinner, like the poor publican, with downcast eyes feels the power of the divine intercession within him, which maketh the intercession, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

How vitally important then is the intercession of Christ, by his Spirit, for and in us; not a desire can go up from us to God with acceptance without it. No heavenly blessing can come down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, but through it. Since the world began no man has ever uttered without hypocrisy the words, "Thy will be done," unless prompted thereto by the intercessory Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

While writing this article, our mind has reverted to our early experience, and the traditional views we entertained of the intercession of Christ. More than fifty-six years ago, when we were a child, a deep sense of guilt and condemnation pressed us down with crushing weight, and while in this condition imagination described to us an offended Father, incensed against us, and ready to hurl his fiery vengeance upon our guilty head, in an everlasting storm, and truly we felt a consciousness that we deserved his wrath; but in our thoughts the Father was austere and exacting; we imagined the Intercessor, as pleading anxiously in our behalf, trying to prevail with the Father to spare us at least a little longer. There seemed to us to be a wide difference between them in regard to us. But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in us, we beheld the light of the glory of God in the face of our dear Redeemer, and we were amazed to find that it was the love of God to us, when we were dead in sins that provided a Savior for us. And we shall never be able fully to express

what was our transport and joy to know that God was in Christ reconciling us to himself, and that the salvation of all the redeemed people of God is according to God's own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ before the world began.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 338-343

INTOLERANCE OF PROTESTANTS WHEN IN POWER.

New Vernon, N. Y., Jan. 15, 1845.

HAVING expressed our views freely in former numbers of this paper, upon the intolerant spirit which is manifested by certain Protestants, in their indefatigable efforts to control and manage all the schools and fountains of mental improvement of our country, and to enforce their sectarian dogmas upon the community, without regard to the consciences, or constitutional rights of those who honestly dissent from their standards of orthodoxy; and also in the extraordinary exertions they have made to get our civil government committed, and our legislatures to so far transcend their constitutional power as to legislate upon the divine law; and having, with all, strongly repudiated the recent unprovoked persecution and slaughter of Catholics, for their religious faith; we have been most unceremoniously denounced by the "Holy Alliance," as an advocate of the Catholics - a friend of publicans and sinners. Even some of our brethren have evinced some symptoms of alarm lest we should indirectly encourage heresy, and be set down as an abettor of Romanists. But our friends will not find us insensible of the persecutions which have stained the history of the Romish church in former days and in other countries; but we contend that the evil is not peculiar to any one sect of religionists - other sects have been equally intolerant whenever they have had an opportunity. Let any religious sect among us receive the patronage of the government, then woe to the dissenters from their doctrines. If we were in need of testimony to demonstrate our position, beyond what

is now staring us in the face, of recent events among us, we might refer our readers to the creeds and confessions taught, and the principles carried out in this and in other countries by the Presbyterians. [Not that we would, by any means, single out the Presbyterians any sooner than their mother church, the Catholics, for an example of intolerance; for, as we have said repeatedly, the spirit of intolerance is peculiar to no denomination of religionists, but common to all, when connected with worldly or secular power.]

Thomas Jefferson, after commenting on the danger that might arise to our country from the introduction of monarchical or other predilections by immigrants, warns us particularly against a more serious danger, growing out of the intolerance for which Presbyterianism has been distinguished in all ages. In Vol. IV., page 358, he remarks:

"The atmosphere of our country is unquestionably charged with a threatening cloud of fanaticism, lighter in some parts, denser in others, but too heavy in all. I had no idea, however, that in Pennsylvania, the cradle of toleration and freedom of religion, it could have risen to the height you describe. This must be owing to the growth of Presbyterianism. * * * Their ambition and tyranny would tolerate no rival, if they had power. Systematical at grasping at ascendency over all other sects, they aim at engrossing the education of the country; are hostile to every institution they do not direct; are jealous at seeing others begin to attend to that object."

On the same subject, he writes in his letter to William Short, (p. 322:) "The Presbyterian clergy are the loudest, the most intolerant of all sects; the most tyrannical and ambitious; ready at the word of a lawgiver, if such a word could now be obtained, to put the torch to the pile, and to rekindle in this virgin hemisphere the flames with which their oracle, Calvin,

consumed the poor Servetus, because he could not subscribe to the proposition of Calvin, that magistrates have a right to exterminate all heretics to the Calvinistic creed. They pant to re-establish by law that holy inquisition which they can now only infuse into public opinion."

To show the ground on which the illustrious statesman and champion of equal rights founded his warning, a late writer has collected. testimony from the most authentic history; he says:

"It is necessary to give a slight sketch of the rise and progress of Presbyterianism, or at least a few extracts from the standards of that faith, from public confessions practically illustrated by penal enactments, and also from the writings of the chief framers and expounders of that doctrine.

"We will commence with the confession of Helvetia, which teaches 'That the magistracy ought to have the chief place in the world. His principal duty is to procure and maintain peace and public tranquility; to extirpate falsehood and all superstition, impiety, and idolatry, and shall defend the church of God; for indeed we teach that the care of religion doth chiefly appertain to the holy magistrate.'

"The Dutch confession declares that God 'hath armed the magistrate with a sword to punish the bad and to defend the good. Furthermore, it is their duty not only to preserve the civil policy, but also to endeavor that the ministry be preserved; that all idolatry and counterfeit worship be abolished,' &c.

"The confession of Saxony teaches that 'the word of God doth in general declare this concerning the magistrate; first, that God wills that the magistrates, without all doubt, should sound forth the force of the moral law among men, according

to the ten commandments, or law, natural by laws forbidding idolatry and blasphemies,' &c.; for well has it been said of old, 'that the magistrate is a keeper of the law; i. e. of the first and second table, as concerning discipline and good order. This ought to be their special care (of kingdoms and their rulers,) to hear and embrace the true doctrine of the Son of God, and to cherish the churches, according to Psalm ii. and xxiv., and Isaiah xlix., and kings and queens shall be thy nurses, i. e. let commonwealths be nurses of the church, and to godly studies.'

"The French confession declares 'that God hath delivered the sword into the magistrate's hand, that no sins committed against both tables of God's law, not only against the second but the first also may be suppressed.'

"The celebrated professor of theology, Turretin, thus explains the Geneva Confession: 'Magistrates have the right to restrain contumacious and obstinate heretics, who cannot be cured of their errors, and who disturb the peace of the Church, and even to inflict upon them due punishment, since magistrates are keepers of both tables, and the care of religion pertains to them,' &c.

"The Westminister Confession, chap. xx. art. 4, teaches that 'The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven; yet he has authority, and it is his duty to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept true and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed, all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline be prevented or reformed, and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath the power to call synods, to be present at

them, and to provide that whatsoever be transacted in them be according to the mind of God.'

"The striking uniformity in all these Confessions for the consolidation of church and state government, must be observable by all; and had I time, I would here transfer the many scriptural testimonies which they have quoted as explanatory of the 'mind of God,' or more plainly speaking, as arguments for the accursed union of church and state. But, by way of illustrating these confessions, particularly of the Westminister Confession, which is the standard of Presbyterianism of this country, I would submit the following extracts from penal enactments, from the declarations of General Assemblies, &c.:

'That papistry and superstition may be utterly suppressed, according to the acts of Parliament, repealed on the 5th Act Parl. King James VI. And to that end they ordain all papists and priests to be punished with manifold civil and ecclesiastical pains, as adversaries to God's true religion, preached and by law established within the realm. (England.) Act 24, Parl. II, King James VI.'

"From the coronation oath in the National Covenant, we extract the following:

"'And they shall (the kings and princes) abolish and gain-stand all false religion contrary to the same, (the Westminister Confession,) and they shall be careful to root out of their empire all heretics and enemies to the true worship of God.'

"'So it cannot be denied, (see Declaration and Brotherly Exhortation, in the Acts of Assemblies, August, 1647,) that upon these passages and proceedings hath followed the interrupting of the so much longed for reformation of

religion, of the settling by Presbyterian government, and of the suppressing of heresies and dangerous errors, which works the parliament had taken in hand.'

"'We are also very sensible of the great and imminent dangers into which this common cause of religion is now brought by the growing and spreading of the most dangerous heresies in England, to the obstructing and hindering of the begun reformation; as namely, besides many others, Socinianism, Arminianism, Anabaptism, &c., and that which is called liberty of conscience, being, indeed, liberty of error, scandal, schism, heresy, dishonoring God, opposing the truth, hindering reformation, and seducing others.'

"In Sewall's History, (Protestant,) p. 191, we find the following: 'In the year 1653, a law was made' (against Quakers,) 'which, besides imposing heavy penalties and imprisonments, extended to working in the house of correction, severe whipping, cutting off ears, and boring through their tongues with red hot irons, whether male or female, and such like inhuman barbarities.'"

(Concluded.)

NEW VERNON, N. Y,. Feb. 1, 1845.

"ACCORDING to the same author, page 218. a law was made by the court of Boston, October 20, 1658; we extract a part: 'Whereas, there is a pernicious sect (commonly called Quakers,) do take upon them to change and alter the received laudable customs of our nation, and also to destroy the orders of the churches, by denying all established forms of worship; for prevention thereof, this court doth order and enact, that every person or persons being convicted to be of the sect of the Quakers, shall be sentenced to be banished upon pain of death.'

"It will be observed that these laws are in perfect harmony with the confessions above given, but the principal article found in all these confessions of faith, and in that of Presbyterianism of this country, and which they believe as a positive commandment revealed to them by Almighty God, is (Confession of Faith, pages 218, 219, Ques. 108,) the disapproving, detesting, opposing all false worship, and according to each one's l;lace and calling, removing it and all the monuments of idolatry.

"Here is a pretended commandment from Almighty God, directly opposed to civil and religious liberty, hostile to all other denominations, and inimical to the Constitution of the United States, as that Constitution recognizes the right of all worshiping God according to their own predilections. We hope every friend of human rights will weigh it well. It is a commandment which enjoins upon all, from the petty tipstave in our courts up to the president of the United States, to 'remove, according to each one's place and calling, all false worship, and all the monuments of idolatry.' But this we are told means 'moral influence.' 'We are compelled to say that this meaning is sufficiently refuted by their history, by their penal enactments, by the writings of the chief framers and expounders of their doctrines, who persecuted, and also by the scriptural quotations which they have adduced as confirming the warrant for their inhuman and intolerant persecutions. The seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, referred to particularly, is very expressive on this point. Verse 2 says, ' And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor show mercy unto them.'

Verse 5: 'But thus ye shall deal with them, ye shall destroy their altars, and break down their images, and cut down their groves, and burn their graven images with fire,' &c.

"For practical illustrations of these verses, or rather of the whole seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, and of the meaning of 'moral influence,' I would merely advert to the cantons of Switzerland, where the Presbyterians banished the Baptists under penalty of death if they returned; in the canton of Zurich, where (see Ruchet's History, Protestant, of the Reformation in Switzerland, vol. iii. page 99,) they decreed that not only Baptists themselves, and those who protected them, should be but to death, but that all non-informants would be condemned as perjurers to imprisonment and exile; and in Berne, where they extirpated the same denomination, beheading the men and drowning the women. Singular illustration of 'removing all false worship,' truly, by 'moral influence.' Look, too, in Holland where they drove the remonstrants out of their churches, plundered them of their property, condemned the Arminians, deprived them of the exercise of their religion, banished their ministers, racked to death the Lutherans, and quartered the Catholics. View them in Geneva, burning heretics at the stake; in Scotland, putting those to death who said or heard mass three times; in England, depriving the Episcopalians of the book of Common Prayer; in Ireland, murdering the Catholics like wild beasts; and in New England, persecuting the Quakers, stripping men and women half naked, fastening them to cart tails, dragging them through the surrounding towns, while scourging them unmercifully upon their backs, imprisoning them, confiscating their goods, cutting off their ears, boring their tongues through with red hot irons, and at last hanging them upon an ignominious gallows. Verily these are striking exemplifications of 'removing all false worship by 'moral influence.'

CALVIN IS regarded as the founder of Presbyterianism, although few of that order retain at this day much more than his persecuting spirit, which is shown up in history in connection with acts of the most barbarous cruelty against

those who refused to embrace his theory. After plundering Servetus of his property - confining him in a damp prison till "he was almost eaten up with vermin," denying him an advocate, loading him with every indignity that barbarity could invent, and at last burning him at the stake, he wrote a work entitled "A faithful account of the errors of Michael Servetus, in which it is proved that heretics ought to be restrained with the sword." In a letter to Marques de Poet, dated September 30th, 1561, he says, "Honor, glory and riches shall be the reward of your pains; but above all, do not fail to rid the country of those zealous scoundrels who stir up the country to revolt against us. Such monsters should be exterminated, as I have exterminated Michael Servetus, the Spaniard." (See Robinson's Researches, p. 340.)

"John Knox, the reputed founder of Presbyterianism in Scotland, and who, according to Doctor Heylin, characterized the cold blooded assassination of Beaton as a "godly act," laid down these principles:

"*Ye* are bound to remove from honor, and punish with death, (if the crime so require) such as deceive the people, or defraud of that food of their souls; I mean the lively word." Knox's History of Reform, p. 10.

"None provoking the people to idolatry ought to be exempted from the punishment of death. Page 21.

"It is not only lawful to punish to the death such as labor to subvert the true religion; but the magistrates and the people are bound to do so, unless they would provoke the wrath of God against themselves." Page 25.

"Intimation was made to others as to the abbott of Corraguel, the parson of Saughn, and such, that they should neither complain to the Queen nor council, but should

execute the punishment that God has appointed idolaters wherever they should be found." Page 352.

Edwards, says Neal, when addressing the civil rulers respecting the commandment, "removing all false worship," declared, "A connivance at and suffering without punishment, such false doctrines and disorders, provokes God to send judgments. A *toleration* doth eclipse the glory of the most excellent reformation, and makes the sins to be the sins of the legislature that countenances them. A magistrate should use coercive power to punish and suppress evil, as appears from the example of Eli." "Again," says Edwards, "toleration will make the kingdom a chaos, a Babel, another Amsterdam, a Jordan, an Egypt, a Babylon. Toleration is the ground-work of the devil, his master-piece and chief engine to uphold his tottering kingdom. It is a most compendious, ready and sure way to destroy all religion, lay waste, and bring in all evil. It is a most transcendent, Catholic and fundamental evil. As original sin is the fundamental sin, having the seed and spawn of all sins in it, so toleration hath all errors in it and all evils." See Verplank's Discoveries, pps. 23 and 24.

"My judgment," says Baxter, another celebrated divine, "I have always freely made known. I abhor unlimited liberty, or toleration of all."

As we have before said, we would by no means single out the Presbyterians as the only sect possessing a spirit of intolerance: the same proscriptive and intolerant spirit has always characterized every system of worldly religion, from the days of Cain to the present time; and at this day that spirit is as rife among those Baptists who have drunk in the worldly principles of Protestants and Catholics, as among any other sects, according to the degree of worldliness, human wisdom, human power and human means, they have incorporated into their religious faith and practice. The poor

Old School Baptists would not long escape the prison, the cart tail scourge or the stake, if the secular power were in the hands of New School Baptists. Already have some of them recommended the penitentiary for the correction of Old School Baptists; and others have prayed that we may be laid quietly away, where our "croaking may no longer disturb the onward move of their car of salvation."

That there are or may be many among the Presbyterians who cherish no such feeling against their religious opponents as those attributed to their order in the foregoing examples, we will not dispute; and there may be some exceptions also among other worldly sects of religionists: but it is too palpably true to admit of contradiction, that at this day the various orders of Presbyterians lead the van, in pressing upon our legislatures, that it is their duty to use the sword in defence of their religious tenets. Who are they at this very time laboring to persuade the legislatures to incorporate religious drilling under legal provisions and penal enactments with our common school instructions? And who are loudest and foremost in asking for and receiving from our government chartered privileges and exemptions? And who are now receiving from the funds of our state and nation more than three-fourths of all the money appropriated for educational purposes, and thereby enabled to grasp the control of by far the greater number of all the collegiate institutions of our country? Let the Presbyterians themselves answer these interrogatories. Doctor E. S. Ely declared, years ago, that "Two-thirds of all the colleges, theological seminaries and academical institutions in this country are under the instruction and control of the Presbyterians." Another of their divines (Doctor Barton) has said, "When all our colleges are under our control, it will establish our sentiments and influence so that we can manage the civil government as we please." "They aim," as Jefferson said truly, "at engrossing the education of the country." In what

way, their own publications will best illustrate. The Sunday School Union have in various reports declared their intention "to force out of circulation" all such elementary books as disagree with their views, to "revise and alter" - "yet keep their titles " - to change the ideas of authors, and to. become "dictators to the consciences of thousands of immortal beings!" See Appendix to Doctor Ely's sermon, published with remarks by himself in 1828. Also Preface to the catalogue of Sunday School Books for 1826. And what is their object in thus dictating to the consciences of thousands of immortal beings? The Appendix to Second Annual Report of Sunday School Union, 1826, page 93, gives the answer: "In ten years, or certainly in twenty, the political power of our country would be in the hands of men whose characters have been formed under the influence of Sabbath Schools."

In perfect harmony with these declarations, the Presbyterians, aided by other sects, including New School Baptists, have been operating by manufacturing public opinion through the agency of Sunday Schools and other kindred institutions, and in dictating to the consciences of thousands of immortal beings, through the legislatures, until now their plans of operation are so far matured and so firmly established as to almost defy opposition.

In regard to their seizure of our schools, perhaps they have gone further in this than in any other state. Here they have not only managed to place about two-thirds of all our educational funds at the disposal of the Regents of the university, composed in part of clergymen, and by appropriations made by the legislature to the use of colleges and academies which, by their own admission, are principally under the control of Presbyterians; but they have got a Normal School established at Albany, under the supervision and control of the Regents and the State Superintendent, to drill those who are to have charge of our common schools.

Thus by one sweeping stroke of legislative power, all the educational institutions of our state, and according to their own declarations, they have now the instruments of controlling the political affairs of our state, and of dictating to the consciences of immortal beings. All that is now wanting for the consummation of their most ambitious desires, is to first have time to prepare a sufficient number of pupils at the Normal School to monopolize all the common schools of our state, and then persuade the other states of the Union to imitate the example of this state. Let this policy be extended, as powerful efforts are now being made to extend it throughout the United States, and the entire rising generation must be at the mercy of those conscience dictators; parents are no longer to choose what books shall be read; all books obnoxious to the interests of Sunday Schools or the church and state establishment, must be forced out of use. Already has the legislature vested a power in the superintendents to remove books from our school libraries which they may deem objectionable; but this is not all: the people are not to be allowed to judge for themselves as to the qualifications of, or to select their own school teachers. Agents, subservient to the wishes of the Regents, are to decide who shall teach and what shall be taught. "Religion, but not sectarianism," they say, "must be taught in our schools" - such religion as all religious sects are agreed in. But what kind of religion is there in which all sects agree? It is idle to talk of all agreeing upon religious subjects. But if all the human family were perfectly agreed in their preference for pure bible religion, that religion could not be taught in schools as a science, for it is purely a revelation.

The following article, which we copy from the New England *Puritan,* goes to establish the correctness of our position, that no religion can be taught that is not sectarian, and also that the Presbyterian Puritans desire to avail themselves of our schools for the inculcation of their

sectarian tenets. The editor of the *Puritan,* however, is less reserved in avowing the convictions of his own mind upon the subject, and so far we commend his honesty; if others would speak out as plainly what they mean, we think there would he less danger of misleading the public mind.

“THE SCHOOL QUESTION.”

“THE hostile interests of different sects touching the subject of religious instruction in the public schools, are ominous of serious disturbance, sooner or later, to our system of popular education. In the state of New York the matter has already assumed a serious aspect. And we see not but that the same reasons and motives will eventually operate to similar results in all the other states. Indeed, the laws of Massachusetts, while they expressly require moral and religions teaching in the common schools, do in the next breath virtually exclude it; for they require all teaching to be excluded which favors any particular sect, or which is opposed to the views of any sect. And as there is almost no religious truth which some of the sects among us do not oppose, there can be no religious teaching in our schools without a violation of this part of the law. But as the law contradicts itself touching this matter, those who do teach and those who do not teach religion, are equally obedient to the law. And there is, in the smaller towns especially, where sects have not been so much multiplied, much of religious teaching yet remaining.

“But the question must yet come up for a practical solution, whether or not religion shall be excluded from our schools. And it is time that the true principle of action in such a case were better defined. As religion - and evangelical religion - the religion of the Puritans - is the parent of the common school system, it would seem that she ought to retain her influence in the schools. As religion is the foundation and prop of all our civil institutions, and as that moral influence

which religious teaching imparts is essential to give our common schools their value in preserving our frets institutions, it would seem to be self-evident that, for civil purposes, religion should and must be taught in our common schools.

"Then, on the other hand, the genius of our institutions protects the interests of all sects; and men of no religion come in under some sects, and claim to have their rights allowed and their children protected from religious truth! Now what shall we say? Is the theory of our government here at war with itself? Perhaps not: still, here is a difficulty for which it has made no provision. And how shall this difficulty be met? It is useless to think of finding a code of religion and morals, that can be at all effective, against which no sect would object. Give to each and all sects the liberty to erase what they will from the system of revealed religion, and then give the Papists liberty to throw out the whole bible at once, and the remnant would not be worth teaching.

"There seems to be but one way to avoid this difficulty; and that is, to separate the schools and the state, as we have separated the church and the state. There would be evils attending this measure; but the question is, whether they would be greater than the evil of wholly divorcing religion and science. If there is any way in which the religion of Jesus can have a place in the instructions of our common schools, and yet no sect, christian or infidel, complain of it very well. But if there be no such way, is it not better for each sect to have its own schools, and teach religion fully and faithfully after its own fashion? Where the state has funds for the support of schools, they might be distributed according to some equitable ratio; and the some tax which is now laid might, if expedient, be continued, and the sum distributed to different schools in just proportion fixed by law.

“It is not pretended that there would be no loss in this mode of action. There might be a difficulty in that case for securing so general an education of the people, inasmuch as the religious part of the community would be less likely to have schools for their children; and there might be some difficulty in carrying out a satisfactory distribution of the funds.

“But these and other difficulties might be, at least in part, compensated. In that case there would be a freer and more unrestrained action in religious teaching. A large part of the community would have an education vastly better than they now have. So far as the religious part of the community are concerned, the teaching would do far more than it now does to uphold the pillars of state; and the irreligious part would have hardly less of religious teaching than they now have.

“And further, the influence and efficacy of religious instruction would then be practically tested. We should have religious and irreligious schools, and we should see the difference in the results. We should see also how well, and how long the enemies of religion would remain the friends of education when set off by themselves. Teachers of religious schools would then give more religious instruction.

“Thus some great and practical questions would have elucidation by the change. Religion might gain a great advantage by being allowed to stand by herself and on her own institutions. God has once affectingly illustrated the power of Puritanism, and given it the exclusive honor of being the foster mother of free and healthy education. In suffering, at the present time, this conflict to come up, throwing asunder the educational efforts of the different sects, he may be preparing in another form, to illustrate the same great principle.”

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials – Volume 2
Pages: 513-528

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME XLIX.

Having been spared to the close of the forty-eighth volume of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, and the forty-eighth year of the editorial labor of the senior editor, we feel constrained to record the goodness and mercy of God to usward, for we are deeply sensible that it is because his mercies fail not that we are not consumed. But having obtained mercy, we faint not, and we are encouraged to believe that

"He who has helped us hitherto,
Will help us all our journey through."

At the age of thirty-two years, when physically vigorous and in the prime of life, we felt that a necessity was laid on us to assume the responsibility of attempting the publication of this periodical, but it was not without fear and much trembling we entered upon the work. At that time we issued our Prospectus, in which we stated the object and design of the publication, and also gave a condensed abstract of the doctrine and order which we proposed to assert and maintain. And now, after the labor of almost half a century, we do not know that we have been charged with any departure from the summary which we then set forth.

The elders and brethren from the various States of the Union, who met in solemn convocation at Black Rock, Maryland, in 1832, to consider the necessity of withdrawing fellowship from the Fullerite or Missionary Baptists, as they were then called, examined our abstract of sentiments and approved them; and in their Address to all the saints who continued steadfast in the doctrine and fellowship of the Old order of Apostolic Baptists, recommended our paper as a reliable exponent of Old School or Primitive Baptist doctrine

and order, and ordered that their first and second Manifestoes should be published in our columns.

The issuing of the SIGNS opened a medium of communication for the Old order of Baptists, and our circulation extending into nearly all the States and Territories of our country, was joyfully received and readily patronized by many isolated brethren of our faith and order, who had supposed that they only were left alone to contend for the faith as it was once delivered to the primitive saints. For several years we encountered opposition almost exclusively from those of the New order of Baptists, from whom we had withdrawn the fellowship which for a time had only nominally existed. The reproduction of our editorials, which were republished in two volumes, will show that until it was thought that in a pecuniary point of view our paper had become self-sustaining, we had to encounter opposition principally from those from who we had withdrawn our fellowship. But after the New School Baptists had concluded to retire from the field and let us alone, we were soon compelled to realize that we had opposition to encounter much nearer home, and that we had enemies which were of our own household, of the nature of whose opposition, and mode of whose warfare, the patrons of our later volumes are already apprised. We do not wish to murmur or complain, for we have great reason to rejoice and be thankful, that the number of those who profess to be Old School or Primitive Baptists who oppose us is comparatively very small, while a very large majority sustain us, and our patronage for the past years has been considerably extended. Although we have reached and passed the age of four score years, our physical powers have been remarkably well preserved. During the past year we have traveled about seven or eight thousand miles, visited and preached in many States and Territories of the United States, and in Canada; and in every association and church where we have visited and preached

the word we have been cordially received and kindly treated, and invited to repeat our visits should providence permit. We feel to boast only in the Lord; it is of his goodness and loving kindness alone, in putting into the hearts of dear brethren to extend their fellowship to us, that we desire to speak. We feel truly humbled under a sense of the goodness and mercy of God to us, notwithstanding our utter unworthiness of his kind and gracious regard.

Our prospect for the Forty-ninth Volume is encouraging. With an increasing list of reliable subscribers, and a goodly number of valiant men of Israel, "all holding swords, being expert in war; every man hath his sword upon his thigh, because of fear in the night," to keep us supplied with able communications, with which to fill and enrich our columns, we hope to make this volume as interesting and edifying as any which have preceded it. Our son, who is now associated with us in business, has charge of the business affairs of the office, by which arrangement we are enabled hereafter to devote our more time fully and constantly to the editorial department of the paper.

The forty-eight consecutive years of our labor in this field is all the guarantee we deem necessary, that as long as we shall be spared to conduct the editorial department of the SIGNS no pains shall be lacking on our part to make the succeeding volumes reflect the doctrine and order of the gospel. We feel a desire like that expressed by the apostle Peter (2 Peter i. 12-16). Like him we wish to stir up the pure minds of our brethren. Knowing that we must shortly put off the tabernacle of flesh, we will endeavor that after our decrease they may know that we have not followed cunningly devised fables, in setting forth the self-existent and eternal Godhead, and Mediatorial glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the extent of our ability. That we have never believed in what is called the Parkerite Two-seed doctrine, nor the Arian

heresy, nor the non-resurrection of the dead; but have constantly contended for the opposite of them all. We have never claimed to be infallible in our views of the doctrine of God our Savior, only so far as we have been sustained by the divinely inspired scriptures of truth; nor have we ever desired any of our readers to follow us or our views, any further than we, through grace, have followed Christ.

The SIGNS will continue to be printed on a fine and costly quality of book paper, on a Hoe cylinder steam power press, and its mechanical execution by a first-class practical printers in a workmanlike manner; each number containing forty-eight columns of reading matter, and on the same terms as formerly, namely, one copy for one year, two dollars, payable in advance, which, considering the quality and quantity, is as cheap as can be well afforded. WE request our agents and all friends of the paper to make an effort to extend our circulation by procuring new and paying subscribers.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 1
January 1, 1881.

INTRODUCTORY SALUTATION

With thanksgiving to the bountiful giver of every good and perfect gift, we greet the advent of another New Year, and pray that it may be attended with greater happiness to our readers than the last two of its predecessors have been. Our devout gratitude is due to our gracious and long-suffering God, that amid all the calamities, strife, conflicts and carnage of the last year, our lives have been preserved, and we have been favored so far beyond many of our fellows. But as our days are flying faster than the weaver's shuttle, hurrying us on to that destiny which lies before us, it is meet that we should enter upon the developments of the new year with ardent prayer that God may guide, direct, support and protect us in and throughout all our subsequent pilgrimage. May the God of all grace so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. And if we be risen with Christ, may we seek those things that are above, and may we set our affection on things above, and not on things on the earth. Here on earth we have no continuing city; we are but wayfaring and transient passengers, rapidly filling up the measure of our days, and hastening to the house appointed for all the living.

Who of us, in a retrospection of the past year, can feel satisfied that we have passed the time of our sojourning with that singleness of heart that becomes us, as the professed flowers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God? That we have used our example and influence in striving to allay the spirit of strife and discord with which all the elements around us are so fearfully surcharged? Who of us can feel assurance that the blessing of the peace-maker belongs to us? We may not have designedly fanned the flame of discord, or urged our fellow men to deeds of blood guiltiness, but have we exemplified in our own lives and deportment the spirit which

breaths “Peace on earth and good will to men?” A most solemn obligation rests on us who profess the religion of him who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, lest we belie our holy profession, deny our Lord and Master, and earn for ourselves a classification with those who have gone in the way of Cain.

But whatever may have been our waywardness, our wanderings, God has graciously spared our unprofitable lives, and here we are now entering upon the incoming year as monuments of the forbearance and long suffering of our merciful God. May the sincere aspirations of our hearts arise in thankful strains of praise to God, and in supplication that he may grant us grace to keep us from evil, and that his Holy Spirit may guide us in the way of holiness, for his name’s sake.

In entering upon the labors of the new year, our patrons will naturally expect an expression from us in regard to our designs and our prospects. It is true paper and all other materials for printing are very high, and the general rise in the price of provisions, fuel, rents, clothing, and all the necessaries of life, will increase the expense of labor, so that the actual cost of publishing will be increased about fifty per cent above the average cost for the first twenty-nine years of our labor, and the depreciation of our paper currency below the standard value of gold, would justify a proportionate increase in our terms; but still, as we greatly desire to keep our terms of subscription within the limited means of the poor, we have undertaken to adhere to our old terms. Yet in doing so, we have presumed on the noble generosity of our more affluent brethren and friends, whose seasonable aid during the last year, saved us from loss, and enabled us to supply the paper to several hundred non-paying subscribers. There are scattered through the country, as our brethren are well aware, very many aged, infirmed, and poor, who take

great delight in reading the “Signs of the Times”, but are really too poor to pay even One Dollar a year for the privilege: these, to the extent of our ability, we have always endeavored to supply gratuitously, but many of them during the last year have been supplied by the liberality of kind-hearted friends.

We were also substantially aided by the vigilance of our friends in procuring for us new paying subscribers. Our list during the past year was increased nearly one thousand. With an enlarged circulation the “Signs of the Times” would be remunerative at one dollar a year paid in advance, provided all were able and prompt to pay that amount, but to enable us to supply the needy we require not only an increase of paying patronage, but the generous contributions of those who are able and willing to assist.

We do not deem it expedient to offer any pledges to our subscribers in regard to the manner in which we intend, if spared, to conduct the publication, more than to say, the best and utmost of our ability shall be employed to make the “Signs of the Times” an interesting and edifying visitant; as the thirty-one years of constant devotion to the work will afford more reliable indemnity than any amount of verbal pledges we could make. For nearly one third of a century our subscribers have born with our infirmities, and kindly overlooked our failures and our imperfections. They have always stood by us, through evil and good report, and when we have been wantonly assailed by persecution, and the envenomed tongue of slander has been employed against us, they have never yet failed to come to our rescue. We are not aware of any essential change in our sentiments in regard to the doctrine, order or ordinances of the gospel since we first commenced our labors, thirty-one years ago. We do flatter ourself that so long a correspondence with very many thousands of our brethren in all parts of the country,

embracing those of all ages, gifts and peculiarities has served to strengthen our faith, enlarge our understanding, and to greatly confirm us in the doctrine and practice by which the Old School Baptists are distinguished from every other religious profession on earth.

If our brethren and friends are looking for anything more or better in the forthcoming volume than they have had in the former volumes, we fear they will be disappointed, although there is abundant room for improvement, and so far as God shall give ability, our constant aim shall be, as it has hitherto been, to do the best we can.

Sensible as we are of short-coming on our part, we feel a pleasing consciousness that we have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God (so far as we were able) from any fear of consequences. We are certain that God himself will sustain his own eternal truth, and maintain his own most precious cause, against any and all opposition, and if we have been or shall be permitted to publish anything incompatible with God’s cause and his truth, the sooner it shall be exposed the better.

As we begin the new Volume we enter the sixty-fourth year of our natural life in the flesh: one-half of that time has been devoted to the publication of this paper. The allotted years of man are now drawing rapidly to their close. But a very few more years can be reasonably anticipated at the very most, and as we descend the steep declivity of mortal life, should we still be spared, our mental as well as physical powers must fail. Our readers will doubtless discover that the meridian with us has long been passed, and the declining of our sun, so far as our days on earth are concerned, indicates that it soon will set. But the Sun of Righteousness, with healing wings bears upward the hope of immortality, so that,

although the outward man decays, the inward man is renewed day by day.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 1, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 444 – 447

INVITATIONS OF THE GOSPEL

MUCH is said about them, and spirited controversy is often raised in deciding whether they are made to the world indiscriminately or only to the children of God. Few have paused to inquire at the sacred oracle, whether there be invitations of any kind in the gospel or not. If there are invitations in the gospel, where are they? What are they? And unto whom are they addressed? These are questions which naturally enough arise, and which the reader may feel but little doubt that he is able to answer satisfactorily; but before he attempts the task let him duly consider what it is that constitutes an invitation. Take for example any message that God has ever communicated to man, whether in the law or in the gospel, and to make of it an invitation, the compliance with the message must rest entirely on the volition of the person or persons addressed. Nothing beyond the simple issuing of the invitation can depend on the will of him from whom it proceeds. Is this the case in regard to any thing which God has spoken in the gospel? Or has God in any case in the law or in the gospel sent a message concerning the result of which his will has nothing to do? Impossible; for he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," and it is God that worketh in his children, both to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

The difference between a call or command, and an invitation, may be illustrated thus: A man may say to his neighbor, "Will you oblige me with your company," &c. Here it is plain to see that the will of the individual alone is to determine whether the other party shall be gratified. But if a magistrate issues his warrant or summons, and in the name of the people of the state or nation commands the immediate attendance or personal appearance of a person, the will of the summoned person is not consulted, and therefore the

message is not an invitation, but a summons with authority. Even the character of a message expressed in the same words takes the form of an invitation or a command, according to the will that governs it. A man may say, Come unto me, all ye that thirst, and I will give you drink. This would be an invitation, because the man supposed to give the invitation has no power to compel a compliance; all the power to determine is with the person addressed. But when God speaks the word, it stands fast; when he commands, it is done. His words are clothed with omnipotent power, as when he commanded, saying, "Let there be light." He did not invite light, for no will but his own was consulted, and he said, Let it be, and it was. Jesus our Lord did not ***invite*** Lazarus to come forth from his grave, although the same words, if spoken to a living person and left optional with such person, whether to comply or not, would have been but an invitation; but, spoken as they were by Christ, and addressed to one who had neither power to will nor to do, could imply nothing like invitation.

When Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," he no more invited the thirsty, than he invited the light when he said, Let there be light. In the first place there is not a soul on the earth that does or can thirst for the living waters which flow from him, until he quickens it, and makes it thirst, and when made to feel its thirst, and even when ***the tongue faileth for thirst*** , it can no more approach the living fountain than it can make a world, until Jesus applies, not the invitation, but the word, "Come unto me." His words are spirit and they are life; and his sheep hear them, and they know his voice, and they follow him; because they have no power or even disposition to resist their Shepherd's voice. The calling of the saints is no where in the scriptures denominated an invitation. he ***calleth*** his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. If he only invited them they would have to get out themselves, or stay

behind. But when he calls, the dead hear his voice (not his invitation,) and they that hear shall live. How would it suit the condition of a poor, lost, helpless soul, one that feels his poverty, inability and impotence, to read the word thus: The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall be invited to live, and they who accept the invitation shall live. And when he inviteth forth his own sheep he goeth before them, provided they accept the invitation. It is perfectly in keeping with every feature of arminianism for workmongers to talk of invitations of the gospel, because the very term implies the willing and the doing power to be in the creature. But it is neither in harmony with the doctrine or experience of the saints of God to so speak of his communications to them as to imply that he has yielded up the government to them; that he has hinged the effect and result of his communications on their will instead of his own will. It is derogatory to his character, it reflects on his wisdom, power, and grace, and the term should be expunged from the vocabulary of Bible Baptists.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
July 15, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
July 15, 1846

THE IRISH REVIVAL

Much has been said through the Protestant press of late of the wonderful revival in Ireland, and the most flattering hopes have been cherished of the speedy overthrow of the Papal, and prevalence of the Protestant cause in that country. The following description of its attendant characteristics, from a celebrated Protestant Bishop, will show that the anticipated transmigration from Catholicism to Protestantism is to result in no great improvement. We copy the article from the *Banner of Liberty,* for the perusal of our readers.

In former ages the delusive spirit of anti-Christ has produced results of a similar type. Those of whom we read in the early days of christianity, who were possessed with devils, were subjected to physical derangement, falling down, losing their reason, and becoming unmanageable. In the early settlement of Kentucky, Benedict describes the manifestation of the most unreasonable and even ludicrous demonstration of religious insanity; such as jerking, biting, barking, crawling about on the floor or ground, to become as little children.

There is scarcely less fanaticism displayed at the present day, not only in Ireland, but also in our own country, by humanly planned, and humanly conducted revivals. Nor have we any right to look for any better results from any religious excitement that can possibly arise from anything short of the quickening power and grace of God. The asylums for the insane in our country afford fearful proof of the deleterious effects religious excitements produce, by stirring appeals made to the fleshly passions of the people. Lashed to a tempest of terror, the frightened victims of alarm, instead of being scared into immortal life, are driven to madness and distraction, while the doctrine of the Bible remains true, that “the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of

righteousness, quietness and assurance forever." Isa. xxxii. 17.

THE DEAN OF DERRY ON THE IRISH REVIVAL.

In a letter to his brother, the Bishop of Raphoe, the Dean of Derry, (Episcopal) says:

"Time, of course, can alone satisfactorily test this as to each individual case. I am strongly inclined to think, however, that many of the cases, and a few of the accompanying phenomena, are to be assigned to lower causes. Some of the seizures have taken place under such circumstances, and accompanied by such symptoms, as to have all the appearance of an epidemic attack - the physical effects not being preceded by any apparent exercise of the mind, or referable to any previous excitement. I have met with cases, of persons who had not been at any meetings, and who had given little or no thought to the subject, suddenly struck in their houses, and even in their beds. One woman, who had felt ill and low, but without any apparent reason, all day, fell out of her bed in a state of insensibility, followed by the usual symptoms. Others have described it as beginning with a pricking sensation in the soles of the feet, gradually advancing upward till it reached the breast, when it become insupportable, and led to fainting, screaming, &c.; and I myself saw a woman who, while sitting in a neighbor's house, conversing on ordinary matters, was siezed with a sudden faintness and all the appearances of a strong hysterical affection. The sensations, as almost invariably described to me, are a great weight and oppression about the heart, with a distressed, anxious feeling: not generally accompanied by a very acute sense of guilt, but rather by a sense of want and restlessness, and an earnest desire for relief, leading to strong and passionate prayers and, cries. This state is usually followed by a kind of trance, in which visions are presented

of Satan under various forms, and offering various temptations; of the torments of the lost; of the Savior at length coming to their rescue, and occasionally of the glories of heaven. A sense of relief and happiness then succeeds, lighting up the countenance and showing itself by every outward demonstration of pleasure, but accompanied and followed for several days by great bodily weakness and exhaustion, much excitability of mind, a disinclination to return to their ordinary vocations, and an almost irrepressible desire to be with those who have been similarly affected. This is nearly the universal process, so far as has come under my notice, and is regularly looked forward to in all its stages by those who are either visited or desire to be. Now while in this there is much that is natural enough, on the supposition of a real work of God's grace in the heart, there is much also that has no necessary connection with such a process, and that may reasonably be referred to natural causes. Atmospheric influences with some, apprehension with others, the excitement of crowded meetings and vehement addresses, a general feeling of expectation and awe, and even a strong desire to be themselves the subjects of this remarkable visitation. Nay, in some cases, exhaustion from long standing pressure and foul air. Any of these may account for the convulsive or hysterical attacks. The visions, &c., are the natural and common result of extreme weakness and exhaustion of mind and body, and the season of relief and comfort may, in a great measure, arise from the abatement or removal of these physical derangements. I am inclined to think that in many instances the entire effect produced may be traced to such causes, and probably much of the outward demonstration, in all. In fact, these phenomena furnish no satisfactory test. I think, therefore, that they ought not to be encouraged, but deprecated. It is a striking circumstance connected with the remarkable revival at Combuislang, in Scotland, in the year 1742; as related by the minister, the Rev. W. McCulloch, that far more of those

who were brought at that time under concern without these bodily agitations, persevered in gospel holiness, than of such as were so affected, and this I believe is generally found to be the case, as though the salutary influence was liable to evaporate in the over excitement of mind and body. It would, I think, be very desirable to call attention to the constant recognition of this truth in our church's services, which abound with supplication for that heavenly gift, and to exhort our people to earnest prayer, both public and private, for the outpouring of a large measure of the Spirit among us. This might be accompanied by such information as to the progress of the movement as can be relied on for accuracy and the absence of exaggeration: care being taken, at the same time, to caution the people against yielding to over excitement, against considering swoons, or convulsions, or visions as in themselves any essential part of God's work in the heart, or as such to be desired or looked for."

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 278 - 280

ISAIAH 2:2-4

Brother Beebe: Please give your views on Isaiah 2:2-4. We live where we can have the pleasure of hearing the gospel preached but once a month; and even then I often have to stay at home: but if I can have your valuable paper to read, it is richly stored with fruit that is sweeter to me than honey, and I am often made to rejoice in God my Savior, for his goodness and mercy in calling poor lost sinners out of darkness into his marvelous light, for

He takes my soul, e'er I'm aware,
And shows me where his glories are.

Yours in Christian bonds,
Barbary Bruce.
Perry County, Ia.
August 4, 1864

Reply: We will submit a few remarks for the consideration of sister Bruce, and our readers generally on the text proposed, in the order in which it is written.

And it shall come to pass. All divine prophecy is thus marked in the most positive and emphatic language, declaring from the mouth of God things which shall come to pass. They must and shall be accomplished because God has so ordained, decreed, and declared. In the absence of God's absolute predestination of events, the prophecies of the scriptures could be no more reliable than the prognostications or auguries of heathen magicians. The very fact that God, by his holy prophets, has declared the end from the beginning is an irrefragable demonstration of the doctrine of his absolute predestination of all things. It is therefore infidelity to dispute that doctrine; for it is a denial of his government. God has at sundry times and divers

manner spoken to the fathers by the prophets; and he is of one mind and none can turn him. He speaks the word and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done.

In the last days. God, in his infinite wisdom, has a time for the accomplishment of all the orders of his throne. Nothing can disarrange the order of events. The fullness of the time must come before the fulfillment of the prediction of the Savior's advent could take place; and were it not for the wise and immutable arrangement of the other of events, worlds might jostle against worlds, and all events so clash as to defeat the counsel and purpose of God. The time specified for the fulfillment of the prophecy of our text is *in the last days,* by which we understand primarily, the last days of the Jewish organization including the days in which God hath spoken to us by his Son (see Hebrews 1:2). The last days of the nationality of the Hebrews. Which last days embraced from the coming of John the Baptist to the destruction of the temple and dispersion of the Jews to the four quarters of the globe. It was at this time the things in our text recorded were accomplished, as we shall presently attempt to show. Still as the entire history of Israel was figurative of the church and kingdom of Christ, we look for corresponding events to be fulfilled in the last days of the church of God among the Gentiles, or on the earth.

That the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, etc. The church and kingdom of our Lord is called his *house* first because it is his residence. He dwells in Zion. "God is in the midst of her: she shall not be moved." Here, saith the Lord, will I dwell forever, for I have desired it. Second, Because it is the home of his family, the place of their birth; of their abode, comfort and protection. They are of the household of God and have a birthright inheritance in the House of the Lord forever. Third, Because the term is

used in the scriptures to mean a seed or posterity, as the House of Israel, the house of David, etc. Fourth, Because it is the anti-type of the Temple or house consecrated to the Lord in the old Jerusalem. Fifth, Because the materials of which it is composed are brought from the forests and dark quarries of nature, and being quickened, are built up a spiritual house, or as timber is framed, so are the saints fitly framed together and built on Christ as their foundation and chief corner stone. And lastly, because they are God's building; and the place where his honor dwelleth (See Hebrews 3:2,4,& 6). But this building is called *the mountain of the Lord's house.* As Daniel predicted of the stone which was taken from the mountain without hands, which he interprets to mean the kingdom which the God of heaven should set up, should wax great and become a great mountain; breaking in pieces the nations of the earth; so the church of God is called Mount Zion; Jerusalem which is above, etc. It is like a mountain firmly established and immovable. Her locality or position is *in the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills.* Observe the mountains and hills are plural, but the top is in the singular number. Where shall we find such a place; a plurality of mountains and hills, having but one top? The several tribes of Israel were often called mountains, and the principle families of these tribes were called hills: as Levi and the family of Aaron; Judah and the family of David. All these mountains and hills melted at the presence of the Lord at the advent of our Savior Jesus Christ. They were to remain until he came, then the mountains should depart, and the hills should be removed (Isaiah 54:10 and Jeremiah 4:24). "I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly." "The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs. What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back? Ye mountains that ye skipped like rams; and ye little hills, like lambs? Tremble, thou earth at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob (Psalm 114:4-7)."

The top or highest elevation of all the mountains of Israel is found in the person of the Messiah. He forms the climax; he shall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high. In his eternal Godhead he is infinitely above all the mountains, and families of the earth; but in his mediatorial character he has taken on him the seed of Abraham, and identified himself with his people. As the promised Messiah, he was to rise out of Jacob, and preside over Israel. The prophets of the Lord in rapturous visions saw him coming upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills; and in holy delight exclaimed, "Let the inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains (Songs 2:8, Isaiah 42:11)."

In him then who is the exalted King of Israel; whose elevation is above the clouds, higher than the heavens: greater than Solomon, higher than Agag, before Abraham; superior to David and in all things having preeminence, was the mountain of the Lord's house to be established. Not in the flesh of Abraham, nor in the covenant of circumcision; not in the law of carnal commandments, nor in a worldly sanctuary, but in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, the church of God was to be established. Chosen in him before the foundation of the world, all his members were predestinated in the fullness of the dispensations of times to be personally and experimentally gathered together in him, and come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:13). This is, be it remembered, an establishment of God himself. Not subject to any uncertainty, nor liable to any change of position or elevation. Quickened together with Christ; the church or mountain of the Lord's house is raised up together with and in him in heavenly places. And being risen together with Christ, they are to seek the things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. O what amazing grace is this! that we should be taken up out of the horrible

pit, and miry clay, and be so exalted as kings and priests; our life hid with Christ in God; and our house, an everlasting habitation established in him who is the High and lofty One that inhabits eternity.

And all nations shall flow unto it. This has reference to the gathering in of the Gentiles. God has a people in all the nations and kindred of mankind. Christ has redeemed them with his blood, and therefore, "The great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come and worship the Lord their God in his holy mountain, at Jerusalem," which holy mountain is established in Christ Jesus our Lord, for He shall gather his sheep with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. They shall not be forced coersively against their inclination. They shall be a willing people in the day of Christ's mediatorial power. He will give them a new heart, a new will, new desires, and in the gospel present irresistible attractions: so that being melted by his love in their heart, they shall flow; like the flowing of water to the great ocean, so shall they flow unto the mountain of the Lord's house; to find there a joyful, safe and sure abode in the house of the Lord forever, where they may inquire in his holy temple.

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. Many people, or a multitude which no man can number, redeemed from every people under heaven, quickened by the same Spirit, moved by the same impulse, animated by the same love, and qualified by the same preparation of heart to enjoy the same spiritual privileges, shall express the same disposition to return to Zion with singing and everlasting joy. When thus prepared by grace to enter into the mountain of the Lord's house, they will not feel selfish, or desire to go alone; they will say, *Come let us go.* They desire that all who love the Lord may participate with them. The psalmist was glad when he heard this appeal:

"...when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Whether the tribes go up: the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord (Psalm 122)." (Read the whole Psalm.) It is not regarded by them who love the Lord as a degradation. They do not go down to the house of the Lord. From the highest pinnacle of earthly greatness or grandeur, it is an infinite elevation to go up to the mountain of the house of the Lord; which is established in the top of the mountains, high above the hills. John, when favored with a view of this heavenly Jerusalem, was carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, where he saw the church adorned as a bride prepared for her husband (Revelation 21:10). It certainly is not natural for streams to flow upwards; nor is there any power of nature that can turn sinners to God. But the water of life which Jesus giveth is of a kind and quality which is ever springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14). When thus inclined to go up to the mountain of the Lord's house, the heaven-born child is filled with wonder and amazement, and he has many inquiries to make, to which he can find no satisfactory answer, only in the school of Christ. He must inquire in the holy temple, if he would learn the mysteries of redeeming grace and sovereign love. The God of Jacob will teach us of his ways. Not only of the way in which he saves them; but of his ways in which he leads them. Jacob's God found him in a waste howling wilderness, and he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. "As an eagle stireth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him (Deuteronomy 32:11,12)." So the Lord teaches and leads his people. Jesus says to them, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls (Matthew 11:29)." He is just such a teacher as the trembling children

want, for he is meek, his terror will not make them afraid; he is lowly and will condescend to men of low degree. He knows the feelings of their infirmities, and will succor them when tempted. He will give them wisdom and will not upbraid them. His ways are past finding out by all the wisdom and study of man; but still his secret is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant. He will teach them his ways.

And we will walk in his paths. When under his tuition to his house, we turn our back upon all our former paths. What we before esteemed as gain, we count as loss; yea, verily, we count all things as dross for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. We desire not to invent or mark out, or pursue ways of our own; nor have we any confidence in the ways which men invent and teach; but we desire above all things that we may walk in his ways, in the footsteps of his flock that we may find where he feedeth, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon.

For out of Zion shall go forth a law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. The way in which all who love God should walk is pointed out by his law. We are not to do as we feel; but as he says. If our own impulse and feelings were a safe and sufficient guide, we would need no other, but it is not so. We cannot be his disciples except we do whatsoever he has commanded us. The only rule for our faith and practice is found in his law which emanates from his throne in Zion. Not from the traditions of men; for they make void his law. It is not to be obtained from schools of men, but from Zion the school of Christ, where his children are taught by his word and by his Spirit. Neither doth his word proceed from men, who use their own mouths and say, The Lord saith, when he hath not spoken. From Jerusalem alone goeth forth his word, the proclamation of which by his great commission must begin at Jerusalem.

(To be concluded in our next number.)

Middletown, N.Y.,
September 1, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 83 – 88

ISAIAH 2:2-4

(Concluded)

And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people. He who is thus to judge the nations and rebuke the people can be none other than the Lord, whose law shall go forth from Zion and his word from Jerusalem. He is the king who shall reign in righteousness, whose princes shall rule in judgment. His name is "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." The government shall be upon his shoulder; He shall reign King of kings and Lord of lords. All power in heaven and in earth is given unto him; and he shall rule in the midst of his enemies. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces as a potters vessel. (Psalm 2:8,9; Revelation 2:26,27.) "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31,32)." Not only shall he judge among the nations, and decide who are and who are not his people; but he will judge of their standing, state and condition, plucking up, casting down, and utterly destroying such as despise and disown his government and oppress his people. He will judge when their cup of wickedness is full; and when to launch the bolts of his wrath for their extinction. He will judge and arbitrate their disputes, and decide all their controversies; and turn the wicked into hell with the nations that forget God. But in a

special manner shall he judge his people, and avenge them of their adversaries. Vengeance belongs to him; he will repay.

And shall rebuke many people. And at his rebuke, the nations shall melt like wax before the flame. “The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth (Psalm 46:6-10).”

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not 4ft up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. By comparing this text with Micah 4, in which the prophecy is given in almost the same words; and from the context of the latter, we infer that this part of the prediction relates to the people of God under the peaceful reign of Christ, and when all nations of Jew and Gentiles, endowed by the spirit of his holy religion, should display the meekness and temper of the Lamb, and exemplify the spirit of the angel’s song, “Peace on earth, and good will towards men.” For notwithstanding the malicious and blood-thirsty spirit of the nations of the earth, when the mountain of the Lord’s house was established in the top of the mountains; or when the gospel church was organized, and the continuance and prevalence of that spirit waxing worse and worse, from that period to the present, it is nevertheless true that those who have come into the kingdom and under the government of Christ have ceased to learn carnal war. The spiritual nature of the kingdom, the purity of her laws, and the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all her subjects forbids that Christians should fight, or shed the blood of their fellow men. It is demonstrated in the scriptures that nearly all the blood that

has ever stained the earth has been shed by those who have professed to fight by the direction and authority of God. But it is equally true that all the human blood that has ever been shed under a religious pretense has been shed by those who not only are not the subjects of Christ; but by those who are the most violent and deadly enemies to Christ and his people, with perhaps the exception of what was shed by Peter when he cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest, for which he was severely rebuked by his Lord and Master. How is it possible for one possessing the spirit of him who went about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, and who even laid down his life for the salvation of his enemies, who when he was reviled, reviled not again; to assault a fellow man with intent to kill, plunder or injure him; when it is positively declared that if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:27)." Can any man follow Jesus by going in an opposite direction from that in which he walked? In short: can we stir up the spirit of discord, strife, malice, and revenge, can we stain our hands in the blood of our fellow men and in so doing follow him who commands us to love our enemies, and do good to those who dispitefully use and persecute us? Let all who profess to be the disciples of Jesus think seriously on these inquiries, and answer each to his God.

However many there may be who profess godliness while their feet are swift to shed blood; we are compelled to believe "there is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:18)," even though they are so much infatuated as to believe they do God service by the indulgence of their cruel passions.

In the change wrought by grace in the hearts of God's people, they lay aside all malice and convert their

instruments of war into implements of husbandry; their swords into plowshares, and their shears into pruning hooks, and apply their physical and mental powers to the legitimate and original purposes for which they were given, to till the earth and procure bread by the sweat of their face.

Micah says, “They shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.” How desirable is such a state of things. Each under his own vine or fig tree, enjoying a peaceable possession of his own labor; without invading the conceded equal rights of others, or fearing any aggression of his own rights. But especially in regard to their religious rights and privileges; for the prophet predicts that in the prevalence of this state of things, as dictated by the spirit of the gospel, and under the reign of Christ as the Prince of Peace, that “All people will walk, every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.” Thus clearly showing that the people of the Living God, while enjoying for themselves the inestimable privilege of worshipping their God without molestation, are not at liberty to deny the same liberty of conscience to their fellow men; who walk every one in the name of his god. The saints having neither the right nor the desire to compel others are therefore not the keepers of other men’s consciences. If they were responsible for the sins of others, and were authorized to dictate the religion of others in the manner that Cain attempted to force his religion on Abel, or old Nebuchadnezzar his on the Hebrew children, or the papists upon non-conformists in the dark ages, or the New England Puritans upon the rest of mankind in general, then they would require to retain their swords and spears, racks and dungeons.

In the third chapter of Micah, the heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel who abhor judgment and pervert all equity, are charged with building up

Zion *with blood,* and Jerusalem with iniquity. In doing these abominations, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money. Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us." How fully has this state of things been realized, not only in the last days of national Israel, but also in those of these last days, in which those of the modern anti-christ have assumed a supervision of ecclesiastical matters. For Peter predicted that, as there were false prophets among the people of Israel, *even,* or exactly so, there should be false teachers among those who profess to be the church under the gospel dispensation, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (II Peter 2:1-3)."

But God will not leave himself without witnesses. Those of the nations redeemed from this delusion shall cease to build up Zion with blood; with cruelty and lies, and in the Mountain of the Lord's house, they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and under the peaceful government of our Lord, they shall learn war no more. "Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord (Psalm 144:15)."

Middletown, N.Y.,
September 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 94 - 97

ISAIAH 4:1

Brother Beebe: - Please give your views on Isaiah 4:1: "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Who do the women and the man represent, and what is meant by being called by his name to take away their reproach? I have been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* for a number of years, and this is the first time I have asked for your views on any subject. Please reply soon, and oblige.

I.M.
Halcoti Centre, N.Y.

REPLY: We presume this passage and its connection had a primary reference to the judgments of the Lord which were at the time of this prophecy impending over Jerusalem, and Judah, in the execution of which Jerusalem was besieged and taken, and the king and subjects went into the seventy years captivity, according to the word of the Lord. The condition to which they were, as a people, literally reduced by various conflicts with opposing powers, in which their armies had been defeated, and their male population thinned out, seems to be indicated by the anxiety of their women to escape from the reproach which by popular sentiment then prevailing, attached to widowhood and single life. But the prophetic application of the text, when considered in connection with the following part of the chapter, evidently looked forward to the time when the rod should come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and The Branch should grow up out of his roots, Isaiah 11:1 compared with Zechariah 6:12,13, "Behold the man whose name is The Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord," etc., as having reference to the coming of the Messiah, the setting up

of his kingdom, the rejection of the Jewish nation and final destruction of Jerusalem. “And in that day.” The day in which the righteous judgments of God should be exhausted upon the Jews is often referred to in the scriptures as the great and terrible day of the Lord - as the day that shall burn as an oven, when the proud and the wicked shall be stubble to be consumed - as the day in which the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish, and worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem. It is a period spoken of not only as the year of God’s redeemed, but also as the day of his vengeance. This day, as we understand it, signifies the gospel dispensation, which should utterly supersede the Jewish. It was to be ushered in by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, and extend throughout all time. Within the limits of that day, the predictions of our text should be realized. “Seven women should take hold of one man.” Harlot women, in many of the figures used in the scriptures, mean false or anti-christian religious organizations. As soon as the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ became measurably relieved from the violent persecution which marked the pages of its early history, and some of the potentates of the earth, from sinister motives, professed to endorse and defend it; thousands who had before been its bitterest persecutors, sought to wipe away their reproach by an assumption of the christian name. It became unpopular and degrading to be longer known in their true characters, as pagans, or Jews, Mohammedans, or infidels, and from that cause they sought the cover of the christian name. In this disguise the man of sin, the son of perdition, was to be revealed, whose coming, as we are informed, should be after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness, with all signs and lying wonders. The old mother, and her household of harlot daughters, showing by the number *seven* a full and complete brood, would not like to bear the reproach of their real character, but like their mother, claim to be queens, and no widows, they desired to be known as the bride, the

Lamb’s wife, and to be called by his name. But while all the anti-christian progeny of Mystery Babylon the Great have evinced their ardent desire to be called by the name of Christ, they have uniformly proposed to stipulate that the privilege they desire shall not be by grace, but conditional, as shown by their proposition: “We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel.” In other words, the Lord should do his part, and they will do their part of the contract. The Lord’s part shall be to shield them from their reproach, by lending the sanction of his name, and they would engage to support themselves, so as to be no expense to him. As for eating his bread, they have no appetite or relish for it. His bread is spiritual, and they being carnal, cannot eat of it, and the apparel in which he clothes his bride is composed of the garments of salvation and the robe of his righteousness. In neither of these have they any desire to appear. Hence, instead of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, or living by faith upon him, they prefer to eat their own earnings, feasting on their own works, and having all the religion they live for, and instead of wearing the garments of his salvation, they choose to be clothed in their own filthy rags, the fig-leaf patch-work of their own industry. Harlots, in the scriptures, are represented as being passionately fond of gaudy show, and to be so dressed as to attract the licentious gaze of those for whom they lie in wait to deceive. Unto the bride of Christ it is granted that she shall be clothed in linen, clean and white; for the white linen is the righteousness of saints. None but the redeemed of the Lord can wear, or even desire to wear, this spotless robe. It is granted to none but the bride, the Lamb’s wife; it will fit none other, nor do or can others appreciate it. Its fashion, its texture, its appearance in all respects, are suited to the church of God.

Middletown, N.Y.,
August 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 243 - 245

ISAIAH 2:2-4

(Concluded)

And he shall judge among the nations, and rebuke many people. He who is thus to judge the nations and rebuke the people can be none other than the Lord, whose law shall go forth from Zion and his word from Jerusalem. He is the king who shall reign in righteousness, whose princes shall rule in judgment. His name is "Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." The government shall be upon his shoulder; He shall reign King of kings and Lord of lords. All power in heaven and in earth is given unto him; and he shall rule in the midst of his enemies. The heathen are his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth are his possession, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces as a potters vessel. (Psalm 2:8,9; Revelation 2:26,27.) "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31,32)." Not only shall he judge among the nations, and decide who are and who are not his people; but he will judge of their standing, state and condition, plucking up, casting down, and utterly destroying such as despise and disown his government and oppress his people. He will judge when their cup of wickedness is full; and when to launch the bolts of his wrath for their extinction. He will judge and arbitrate their disputes, and decide all their controversies; and turn the wicked into hell with the nations that forget God. But in a

special manner shall he judge his people, and avenge them of their adversaries. Vengeance belongs to him; he will repay.

And shall rebuke many people. And at his rebuke, the nations shall melt like wax before the flame. “The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth (Psalm 46:6-10).”

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not 4ft up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. By comparing this text with Micah 4, in which the prophecy is given in almost the same words; and from the context of the latter, we infer that this part of the prediction relates to the people of God under the peaceful reign of Christ, and when all nations of Jew and Gentiles, endowed by the spirit of his holy religion, should display the meekness and temper of the Lamb, and exemplify the spirit of the angel’s song, “Peace on earth, and good will towards men.” For notwithstanding the malicious and blood-thirsty spirit of the nations of the earth, when the mountain of the Lord’s house was established in the top of the mountains; or when the gospel church was organized, and the continuance and prevalence of that spirit waxing worse and worse, from that period to the present, it is nevertheless true that those who have come into the kingdom and under the government of Christ have ceased to learn carnal war. The spiritual nature of the kingdom, the purity of her laws, and the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of all her subjects forbids that Christians should fight, or shed the blood of their fellow men. It is demonstrated in the scriptures that nearly all the blood that

has ever stained the earth has been shed by those who have professed to fight by the direction and authority of God. But it is equally true that all the human blood that has ever been shed under a religious pretense has been shed by those who not only are not the subjects of Christ; but by those who are the most violent and deadly enemies to Christ and his people, with perhaps the exception of what was shed by Peter when he cut off the ear of a servant of the high priest, for which he was severely rebuked by his Lord and Master. How is it possible for one possessing the spirit of him who went about doing good, healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, and who even laid down his life for the salvation of his enemies, who when he was reviled, reviled not again; to assault a fellow man with intent to kill, plunder or injure him; when it is positively declared that if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:27)." Can any man follow Jesus by going in an opposite direction from that in which he walked? In short: can we stir up the spirit of discord, strife, malice, and revenge, can we stain our hands in the blood of our fellow men and in so doing follow him who commands us to love our enemies, and do good to those who dispitefully use and persecute us? Let all who profess to be the disciples of Jesus think seriously on these inquiries, and answer each to his God.

However many there may be who profess godliness while their feet are swift to shed blood; we are compelled to believe "there is no fear of God before their eyes (Romans 3:18)," even though they are so much infatuated as to believe they do God service by the indulgence of their cruel passions.

In the change wrought by grace in the hearts of God's people, they lay aside all malice and convert their

instruments of war into implements of husbandry; their swords into plowshares, and their shears into pruning hooks, and apply their physical and mental powers to the legitimate and original purposes for which they were given, to till the earth and procure bread by the sweat of their face.

Micah says, “They shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid.” How desirable is such a state of things. Each under his own vine or fig tree, enjoying a peaceable possession of his own labor; without invading the conceded equal rights of others, or fearing any aggression of his own rights. But especially in regard to their religious rights and privileges; for the prophet predicts that in the prevalence of this state of things, as dictated by the spirit of the gospel, and under the reign of Christ as the Prince of Peace, that “All people will walk, every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever.” Thus clearly showing that the people of the Living God, while enjoying for themselves the inestimable privilege of worshipping their God without molestation, are not at liberty to deny the same liberty of conscience to their fellow men; who walk every one in the name of his god. The saints having neither the right nor the desire to compel others are therefore not the keepers of other men’s consciences. If they were responsible for the sins of others, and were authorized to dictate the religion of others in the manner that Cain attempted to force his religion on Abel, or old Nebuchadnezzar his on the Hebrew children, or the papists upon non-conformists in the dark ages, or the New England Puritans upon the rest of mankind in general, then they would require to retain their swords and spears, racks and dungeons.

In the third chapter of Micah, the heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel who abhor judgment and pervert all equity, are charged with building up

Zion *with blood,* and Jerusalem with iniquity. In doing these abominations, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money. Yet will they lean upon the Lord, and say, Is not the Lord among us? none evil can come upon us." How fully has this state of things been realized, not only in the last days of national Israel, but also in those of these last days, in which those of the modern anti-christ have assumed a supervision of ecclesiastical matters. For Peter predicted that, as there were false prophets among the people of Israel, *even,* or exactly so, there should be false teachers among those who profess to be the church under the gospel dispensation, "who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (II Peter 2:1-3)."

But God will not leave himself without witnesses. Those of the nations redeemed from this delusion shall cease to build up Zion with blood; with cruelty and lies, and in the Mountain of the Lord's house, they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and under the peaceful government of our Lord, they shall learn war no more. "Happy is that people that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord (Psalm 144:15)."

Middletown, N.Y.,
September 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 94 - 97

ISAIAH 4:1

Brother Beebe: - Please give your views on Isaiah 4:1: "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel, only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Who do the women and the man represent, and what is meant by being called by his name to take away their reproach? I have been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* for a number of years, and this is the first time I have asked for your views on any subject. Please reply soon, and oblige.

I.M.
Halcoti Centre, N.Y.

REPLY: We presume this passage and its connection had a primary reference to the judgments of the Lord which were at the time of this prophecy impending over Jerusalem, and Judah, in the execution of which Jerusalem was besieged and taken, and the king and subjects went into the seventy years captivity, according to the word of the Lord. The condition to which they were, as a people, literally reduced by various conflicts with opposing powers, in which their armies had been defeated, and their male population thinned out, seems to be indicated by the anxiety of their women to escape from the reproach which by popular sentiment then prevailing, attached to widowhood and single life. But the prophetic application of the text, when considered in connection with the following part of the chapter, evidently looked forward to the time when the rod should come forth out of the stem of Jesse, and The Branch should grow up out of his roots, Isaiah 11:1 compared with Zechariah 6:12,13, "Behold the man whose name is The Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord," etc., as having reference to the coming of the Messiah, the setting up

of his kingdom, the rejection of the Jewish nation and final destruction of Jerusalem. “And in that day.” The day in which the righteous judgments of God should be exhausted upon the Jews is often referred to in the scriptures as the great and terrible day of the Lord - as the day that shall burn as an oven, when the proud and the wicked shall be stubble to be consumed - as the day in which the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish, and worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem. It is a period spoken of not only as the year of God’s redeemed, but also as the day of his vengeance. This day, as we understand it, signifies the gospel dispensation, which should utterly supersede the Jewish. It was to be ushered in by the rising of the Sun of Righteousness, and extend throughout all time. Within the limits of that day, the predictions of our text should be realized. “Seven women should take hold of one man.” Harlot women, in many of the figures used in the scriptures, mean false or anti-christian religious organizations. As soon as the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ became measurably relieved from the violent persecution which marked the pages of its early history, and some of the potentates of the earth, from sinister motives, professed to endorse and defend it; thousands who had before been its bitterest persecutors, sought to wipe away their reproach by an assumption of the christian name. It became unpopular and degrading to be longer known in their true characters, as pagans, or Jews, Mohammedans, or infidels, and from that cause they sought the cover of the christian name. In this disguise the man of sin, the son of perdition, was to be revealed, whose coming, as we are informed, should be after the working of Satan, with all deceivableness, with all signs and lying wonders. The old mother, and her household of harlot daughters, showing by the number *seven* a full and complete brood, would not like to bear the reproach of their real character, but like their mother, claim to be queens, and no widows, they desired to be known as the bride, the

Lamb’s wife, and to be called by his name. But while all the anti-christian progeny of Mystery Babylon the Great have evinced their ardent desire to be called by the name of Christ, they have uniformly proposed to stipulate that the privilege they desire shall not be by grace, but conditional, as shown by their proposition: “We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel.” In other words, the Lord should do his part, and they will do their part of the contract. The Lord’s part shall be to shield them from their reproach, by lending the sanction of his name, and they would engage to support themselves, so as to be no expense to him. As for eating his bread, they have no appetite or relish for it. His bread is spiritual, and they being carnal, cannot eat of it, and the apparel in which he clothes his bride is composed of the garments of salvation and the robe of his righteousness. In neither of these have they any desire to appear. Hence, instead of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, or living by faith upon him, they prefer to eat their own earnings, feasting on their own works, and having all the religion they live for, and instead of wearing the garments of his salvation, they choose to be clothed in their own filthy rags, the fig-leaf patch-work of their own industry. Harlots, in the scriptures, are represented as being passionately fond of gaudy show, and to be so dressed as to attract the licentious gaze of those for whom they lie in wait to deceive. Unto the bride of Christ it is granted that she shall be clothed in linen, clean and white; for the white linen is the righteousness of saints. None but the redeemed of the Lord can wear, or even desire to wear, this spotless robe. It is granted to none but the bride, the Lamb’s wife; it will fit none other, nor do or can others appreciate it. Its fashion, its texture, its appearance in all respects, are suited to the church of God.

Middletown, N.Y.,
August 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 243 - 245

ISAIAH XXVI. 19.

"Thy dead men shall live, *together with* my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

We have understood this passage to express a glorious promise given in prophecy, to the church of God, assuring her that her dead men should be quickened simultaneously with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of our brethren however, have taken a different view of the subject. We do not claim to be wiser, or more infallible than they, but whether this text be applicable to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the life of his church in him or not, the apostles by inspiration have established the certainty that the church are risen with Christ, and that God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. We do not, however, understand that this, or any other passage, implies that the resurrection of the bodies of the saints should be simultaneous with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, for the inspired apostles have, since the resurrection of Christ from the dead, assured us of a resurrection at the last day, when these mortals shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles, incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to pass, That death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall the last enemy be destroyed, which is death, and the kingdom of Christ, in all its fullness and glory, shall be delivered to God, even the Father. But in the subject which we understand to be contemplated in our text, and in parallel texts, the Mediatorial union of Christ and his church is strongly implied. As Christ has carried and borne his members all the days of old, so he carried and bore them

when he poured out his soul unto death, when his body slumbered in the grave, and when he burst the bars of death and triumphed over the grave. It was our death which he died, as it is his life which we live. Zion's dead men were quickened together with Christ, and they were raised up together, and sit together in heavenly places.

Omitting the italicised words used in this text, by the translators, it will read, "Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise," &c. If this be the correct rendering of the text, the promise which it contains would seem to us to apply either to the regeneration and ingathering of the saints as the members of his mystical body, and the bringing them into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, or to the final resurrection of the bodies of his redeemed people. Which of the three applications is correct, if any, we leave to our readers generally to judge, as in any or all of them the doctrine is established by the plain Scriptures. Therefore, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." God's people while here in the flesh, dwell in the dust, for their mortal bodies are of the earth, earthy, even as the Lord said to Adam, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh [or the dust], I live by the faith of the Son of God," &c. In this sense God's quickened children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, dwell in the dust, and are called on to awake and sing. But there is another sense in which the words are sometimes, and perhaps more generally used in the Scriptures, as signifying a low condition, captivity and worldly afflictions, and this seems to harmonize with the state of the church as set forth in the chapter of which our text is a part. All their own efforts for deliverance had proved abortive, and they are represented as discouraged, but the word of the Lord comes

to them in their lowly condition with consolation, turning their mourning into joy, saying, Awake and sing, thou that dwellest in the dust. As in Isaiah lii. 1, 2, "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion: put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: * * * shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion." As her day of joy and gladness dawns upon her, she is called upon to arise and sing. Let her tears be dried, and let the bands of her captivity be removed from her neck, let her put on her beautiful apparel, and be clothed with her strength. "For thy dew is as the dew of herbs." The doctrine of God our Savior is compared to dew. Deut. xxxii. 2, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." The doctrine expressed in the speech of our Lord, has the reviving effect on the disconsolate saints, that rain has upon grass, and dew upon the tender herb. It revives, quickens, invigorates the saints, as the rain and dew causes the earth to develop its vegetation. When the precious seed is buried in the earth, it remains there concealed, until the earth is moistened by the showers of rain, or refreshed by the genial dew. Under the influence of the heaven inspired doctrine of Christ, the saints arise from the dust, they awake and sing, they arise and shine, the lame man leaps like the hart, the tongue of the stammerer speaks plainly, and the dumb shout for joy. "And the earth shall cast out the dead." As the parched ground which contains the precious seed, when cheered by the dew, casts out the tender blade, and finally the full corn in the ear, so shall the earth cast out, make manifest and fully develop the sons of Zion, when the seasons of refreshing came from the presence of our God. And so the fruits of the Spirit are made to appear in the saints who dwell in the dust, when the doctrine of our God descends on them, and their fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Middletown, N.Y.
Dec. 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 271 - 273

ISAIAH XXXIII. 20-22.

"Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams, wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

The text is somewhat lengthy, and comprises a variety of metaphors and figurative expressions admirably calculated to instruct and comfort the children of God in regard to the perpetuity and perfect safety of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Zion, or the city of David, which was a type of the church in her gospel organization, was at the time of this prophecy involved in commotion, infested with hypocrites, and encumbered with sinners, or violators of the laws which God had enacted for the government of that commonwealth, and we are told in the context, of the righteous judgments of God upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; by reason of which the sinners in Zion were afraid, and fearfulness surprised the hypocrites, and involved the whole city in consternation, and presented it in a very solemn aspect.

Zion was a city of solemnities, as the place consecrated and chosen for the performance of solemn rites and ceremonies. In Jerusalem stood the temple of the Lord of hosts, the altar and the priesthood, and thither the chosen tribes of Israel went up to worship, as the place consecrated for their national worship, periodical feasts, sacrifices, &c. It was truly the city of the Israelite's solemnities, but from the connection

of our text, we infer that it is so called in this instance on account of their depressed condition. But the prophet of the Lord, calls on Israel to look upon her in her depression, and mark the prophetic declaration of the change which should take place, when Jerusalem should be seen as a quiet, impregnable and safe abode. Whatever allusion was made to the temporal condition of the city of David the spirit of the prediction had a very direct and obvious allusion to the antitypical Jerusalem, or Zion of our God, as displayed in the church under the gospel dispensation. Here under the immediate reign of the King of Righteousness, the Prince of Peace, a happy contrast is presented to what was seen in the depressed condition as seen at the time of the prophecy.

Prophets and kings desired to see the glory of the Redeemer’s kingdom, but they saw it not, only as viewed through the type and shadows of the law. But “blessed are the eyes” of those who saw the glory of the rising kingdom of Christ; who beheld him in his incarnation; beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and who of his fullness received and grace for grace. Their eyes beheld Jerusalem a quiet habitation. Not the old Jerusalem which was destroyed, but the Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and which is the mother of all the saints. The church of the living God, although surrounded with enemies, involved in warfare, assailed by enemies, hated of all men, traduced, persecuted, regarded by the world as the offscouring of all things; yet to the saints who view her in relation to Christ her spiritual Head, and the life hidden with Christ in God, as a kingdom not of this world, founded on Christ and built up in him, having salvation for walls and bulwarks, and the assurance that all things work together for good to all her legitimate citizens, their eyes behold her as a quiet habitation. Quietly and peacefully her inhabitants can confide in the God of their salvation, and sing, “The Lord is my refuge and strength, I will not fear

what man can do.” In the world, said the Redeemer to his disciples, ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. In me ye shall have peace.

Such is the peace and quietness of the church of God, as she stands in her gospel order, her watchmen see eye to eye, they lift up the voice, with the voice together do they sing; no lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast, for none shall be allowed to hurt or destroy in the holy mountain. There shall not come into her the daughters of the uncircumcised nor the unclean, for “except a man be born again he cannot see this kingdom of God.” Men without the Spirit’s work in the new birth may, and many of them do profess citizenship; have a name to live when they are dead, and may have a nominal standing in the visible church, but the church, as she stands in Christ, is only seen by faith, and there the eye of faith can see none but the quickened, regenerated children of God. One body, and one Spirit, even as all are called in one hope of their calling. Within her invincible walls members of Christ

“Shall find a settled rest,
While others go and come;
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home.”

A tabernacle that shall not be taken down. The tabernacle in the wilderness was a portable tent to be set up or taken down as frequently as occasion might require, still it was a type of the immovable kingdom of Christ, of that church which Christ has built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail. The establishment of the church of the living God, in all her order and ordinances, in all her doctrine and discipline, in all her laws and government, in all her members and ministrations, is seen in the gospel as a permanent and immovable building; a building of God, a

house not made with hands; eternal in the heavens. The psalmist says of her, “God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God shall help her and that right early.” The church of Jesus Christ, the New Jerusalem, which is the bride, the Lamb’s wife, is now precisely what she was in her primitive days. She occupies the same ground which was staked out for her by Christ and the apostles in the New Testament. And no community, fraternity or religious organization in this or any other day, which occupies any other ground, can be the Jerusalem of which the prophet speaks.

Not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed. Efforts have been made to remove her stakes, from time to time. Some perhaps have thought she occupied too much ground, and have labored to contract or circumscribe her boundaries, by denying to her the rights and privileges which her God has given to her, but the general rage of her adversaries has been in modern times to extend her cords and to set out her stakes so as to make them embrace the doctrine and institutions of men. Powerful efforts have been made to extend the church of God so as to make her include the modern mission machinery of the age, Sabbath School, Theological Seminaries, Tract, and hosts of other institutions which were not embraced within the stakes as planted originally to mark the boundaries of Zion; but not one of them has in reality ever yet been removed, they all stand precisely where they were set by her maker and builder, who is God. Every religious community, society, organization or confederacy therefore which these stakes do not inclose, is clearly not of this building. No order of people whatever, which is not found within the immutable and immovable stakes which God has set for his tabernacle, has any right to claim the name, nor to assume to be the church of the living God.

Neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. The cords of a tent or tabernacle, secure the curtains to the permanent stakes and give strength and stability to the tabernacle. The cords of this tabernacle may signify the unbroken love of God, which is as a three fold cord and cannot be broken. His love shed abroad in the hearts of his saints who are component parts of the building, fasten them effectually to the stakes which God has planted; and circumscribe them to the doctrine, laws and ordinances which Christ has established. By his love in their hearts they are cemented together, and his love and fear in their hearts forbid that they should depart from him, and he will not turn away from them to do them good. The heathen may rage, and the people imagine a vain thing; the kings of the earth may set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. But he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision. Read Psa. ii. 1-4. They shall not break the cords of Zion; nor shall they make them longer or shorter. None of them shall ever be broken.

But there, at the very place which God has chosen, which he has desired for an habitation, which he has staked out, and of which he says, Here will I dwell forever; in this consecrated spot, this place of the tabernacle of the Most High, there the glorious Lord will be unto us as a place of broad rivers and streams. Christ is the glorious Lord who dwells in this tabernacle of God which is with man.

We cannot now speak of his superlative glory, nor of his dominion as both Lord and Christ; it is sufficient to know that as the glorious Lord he shall ever be found in Zion, his dwelling place. And that too *to us* he shall be the place of broad rivers and streams. As the divine Mediator between God and his people he is the medium or channel through

which that river, whose streams make glad the city of God, flows. The pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb, is found only in him who is the place of it. This life was with the Father and was manifested. And this is the record of Father, Word and Spirit, the Three that bear record in heaven that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He is truly the place of it; he is the Life, and all who thirst must come to him and drink. He is the fountain of living water, and it can be found nowhere else. There he was smitten like the rock in Horeb, and the waters gushing forth in broad rivers and streams, have been ever flowing and shall ever continue to flow. So broad that Ezekiel could swim in it, and so deep that the inspired Paul exclaimed, O, the depth! He is all this to us: Life to us, Rivers of immortality to us; that is to his people. But no foreign craft shall pollute this river; no galley with oars shall paddle or row themselves along by their own power or agency. Galleys with oars are very numerous in the rivers of Pharpar and Abana, in the Euphrates, which waters Babylon, but they shall not disturb the waters which are found in him.

Neither shall gallant ships pass thereby. While all the workmongrel tribes of the earth, with their slavish galleys, are prohibited, so also are all lofty towering gallant ships, with their expanded sails. They have not so much as a passage in these waters of life. None are admitted but those who are humbled under the mighty hand of God.

For the Lord is our Judge. He knows his own sheep. His foundation has this seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are his,” and he alone is competent to judge. Men shall not be allowed to judge what or who shall be admitted to these living waters.

The Lord is our Law-giver. And he has thus enacted; this is his law, and he is abundantly enabled to enforce it.

The Lord is our King. And he is able to govern, protect and secure his people, and to triumph over all his enemies.

He will save us. Us who are his subjects, who can in Spirit call him Lord; but none can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Ghost, those who are subject to his government, who submit to his judgment, and confide in it, and who are satisfied with his laws and delighted to obey them, and who crown him Lord of all as their King. He will save them with an everlasting salvation.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 197 - 202

ISAIAH XL. 11.

“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”

This fortieth chapter of the prophet Isaiah begins with a commission from the God of Israel to comfort his people, and proclaim to them the accomplishment of their warfare, and the full remission of their iniquities; and to cry unto Jerusalem the important message of comfort, which the declaration from such authority is calculated to inspire. A proclamation of what she has received at the Lord’s hands. The prophet is instructed to show the disparity between the two fountains or sources from whence emenates our natural and spiritual life. Christ has said, That which is born of the flesh, is flesh. And the prophet is instructed to proclaim, “All flesh is grass, and all the godliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it; surely the people is grass.” Such is the fleshly nature of man, frail and withering, depraved and mortal, transient and passing away. All the glory of man, his goodliness, his best performances, his brightest hopes and purest actions, like the grass which beautifies, must also perish and fade away. But the word of our God shall stand forever. Peter, in his commentary on the passage, testifies that the spiritual birth of God’s children, is “not of corruptible seed,” like that which produces grass and flowers, which must soon fade and perish, “But of incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever.” Christ himself has also said, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words which I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.” And Peter and his disciples said, “To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.” “The dead shall hear the voice of

the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish."

In this connection Zion is discovered bearing good tidings, and Jerusalem lifting up her voice with strength, calling on the cities of Judah to behold their God. "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him." Then the text follows, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd," &c. Behold your God, ye cities of Judah, ye churches of the saints, in the person of the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. There can be no doubt that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd here spoken of; he himself declares it, saying, I am the good Shepherd, and certain it is that he is the Shepherd that has laid down his life for the sheep; it is equally certain that he is the Lord God that should come with strong hand, and whose arm should rule for him. He is the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, who shall feed his flock, and lead them to living fountains. Here then, we have a clear, full and unequivocal testimony of the absolute deity, and eternal Godhead of Jesus Christ our Lord. It is consoling to all the saints, as it was to the psalmist, to know that "the Lord is their Shepherd, and they shall not want." He is the Lord, or Jehovah; and he is God over all, and blessed for evermore. Truly our second Adam is the Lord from heaven, and the God of the whole earth shall he be called. He is the mighty God and the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. This Maker and Husband of the church is the Lord of hosts, and our Redeemer is the holy One of Israel; and he has come, according to the prediction of the text, to feed his flock like a shepherd, and to gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and he will gently lead those that are with young.

Having established the identity of the Shepherd, and proved his absolute deity, we will next observe that he has a flock, which belongs to him; and briefly show the righteousness of his claim as the proprietor. We are not informed that he was coming to procure a title to a flock, or to obtain a flock, or to see how large a flock he could procure. The possessive case is used by the Holy Ghost in the prediction, *his flock.* He came not to feed or gather the flock of some other shepherd, for he is the Shepherd whose own the sheep are. And he says, "He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep; to him the porter openeth, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them." - John x. 2-4. It is true Paul charged the Elders of Ephesus to feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood; but this has reference to a redemption purchase, not a purchase of an original title to them. If he had held no title to them which was older than the claim of the law, the right of redemption would not be in him. The prophet Isaiah says, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." - Isaiah liii. 6. And Peter testifies that they "were as sheep going astray; but are now returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." - 1 Peter ii. 25. From these portions of Scripture we prove that the redeemed of the Lord were sheep before they strayed, sheep when they were astray, sheep when redeemed or brought back, and continue to be sheep when returned to the fold. It was then because they were his sheep by a prior title, that the Lord in justice could lay on him the iniquity of them all, and command the slumbering sword of justice to "Awake against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, smite the Shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones." - Zech. xiii. 7. If the sheep of some other shepherd, or owner, should go astray and commit trespass, could the damage be

charged to any other than the original owner, by any principle of equity and justice? This flock belonged to Christ before their iniquities were laid on him, before they went astray, and therefore when they had strayed they were held by the porter until their owner should come, prove his property, pay charges and take them away. According to the text, he, whose own the sheep were, came, and, as we have seen, to him the porter opened; for he entered legally, by the door, the iniquity of all the flock was laid on him, and he made full payment, and brought them back from their captivity with his own blood. For ye are not redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained, before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God that raised him from the dead. (1 Peter i. 18-21.) Now if this precious blood of Christ was appropriated by foreordination, before the beginning of the world, for the redemption of those who ultimately by him do believe in God, does it not prove that Christ sustained the relationship of Head over all things to them, so when he came and paid the ransom price for their redemption, he could call his own sheep by name, and lead them out? But our Shepherd has not only laid down his life for the sheep, and called his own sheep by name, and led them out of bondage, out from wrath and condemnation, and into the rich pasture beside the still water, but our text assures us that he shall feed his flock. They require nourishment, and they are not able to provide it for themselves, nor can it be furnished by any other shepherd than their own good Shepherd. God’s people being born of God, possess a life in them that is not of the earth, and cannot feed on earthly food. That which we received of the productions of earth for the sustenance of our fleshly bodies, will not feed the inner man, or the new man which is born of the Spirit, and therefore all that come before Christ, or who attempt to supercede him in feeding his flock,

are thieves and robbers. His being a spiritual flock, must have spiritual food, and the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, himself shall feed them. He spreadeth their table in the midst of their enemies, and he maketh them to lie down in green pastures, beside the still waters, and he maketh their cup to run over. But how shall he feed them? “As a shepherd.” As one who is perfectly acquainted with all their wants. He will deal out to them just at the right times, and in the exact quantities, so that they shall not want. He being the Lord God, can never be impoverished, can never be surprised by famine, he has ample supplies for them, and they shall, under his care and protection, go in and out and find pasture.

But there are times when the flock requires something beside food. The chilling blasts of winter would be too severe for the tender and unfleeced lambs, were it not that their good shepherd bestows on them his unremitting care. He has pledged himself that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. Notwithstanding their strong propensity to stray, although like sheep they have strayed, he shall gather them with his arm; and having gathered them with that strong almighty arm, which shall rule for him, and which he has raised for their defense, he will carry them in his bosom, where they shall be warmed, succored and protected by his own vitality. The pulsations of his own heart they shall feel, and the affection which burns in his bosom shall comfort and cheer them. And he will bestow his tender care on such of the flock as are burdened. It is said of this flock, as they *go up from the washing,* every one of them beareth twins; and there is not one barren among them. (Cant. vi. 6.) Whatever this figure may be designed to illustrate in regard to the sheep of Christ, we know that the children of God, as they go up from the washing of regeneration, feel within them a strife between the flesh and the Spirit which burdens them sorely, and makes them groan

being burdened; and in this case, they like Jacob’s flocks, will not bear over-driving one day. (Gen. xxxiii. 13.) But our Shepherd knoweth all our infirmities, and instead of driving, he gently leadeth them. He knoweth our feeble frame, and he remembereth that we are but dust. How gently doth he succor them when tempted, tried and distressed. Yea, though they pass through the valley and the shadow of death, he will still be with them, and lead them through, for he will never leave nor forsake them. This message belongs to God’s people; the commission is to comfort them; may we be found among them; and may we with them, share in the consolation.

Middletown, N.Y.
July 1, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 465 - 469

ISAIAH 40:20

“He that is so impoverished, that he hath no oblation, chooseth a tree that will not rot; he seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved.”

The propensity of mankind to run into idolatry has not been confined to any period, nation or tribe since the introduction of sin into the world. The depravity of our fallen nature inclines our sinful hearts to pursue whatever is hostile to the principles of holiness and in opposition to God. Man, even in his alienation from God and holiness, is naturally a religious being, irrepressibly inclined to venerate or worship something. The carnal mind being enmity to God, it is not in subjection to his law, neither indeed can it be. Being ignorant of the true God and eternal life, they can have no fear of God before their eyes, and the wild imaginations of their deceitful hearts lead them to claim the right to worship and adore the gods of their own imagination. This principle of idolatry began to be developed in the religion of Cain, the firstborn son of Adam. Destitute of that faith by which his brother offered unto God a more perfect and acceptable offering, he, without regard to divine authority, presumed to offer that which he had obtained from the earth by the labor of his own hands, directed by the judgment of his own depraved mind. As he had neither heart nor desire to unite in the devotions or offerings of faith with his brother Abel, to the true God, as dictated by his Spirit, his offering was dictated by an opposite spirit, to the idol of his vain and wicked imagination, and was therefore a palpable act of idolatry. Such also is the nature of all manner of will-worship in every age; as Christ said to the woman of Samaria, “Ye worship ye know not what,” etc. And to the idolatrous Jews he said, “In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines, the commandments of men.” Jude

says of all false religionists, “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain.” Not only in his way in his partiality for a strange god and an earthly offering of what the true God had not authorized, but also in his persecuting and murderous opposition to the truth as exemplified in his brother and in the offering which he made.

The carnal Israelites, notwithstanding all the temporal deliverances and wonders which the true God had wrought for them, were frequently detected in acts of flagrant idolatry. So strongly was that spirit of will-worship developed in them that not even the dreadful majesty of God displayed at Mount Sinai, with that fiery mount still in their view, could deter them from appropriating their Egyptian spoils to make for them a golden calf, to which they ascribed the glory of their deliverance from the house of bondage. Priest and people were alike involved in the abomination.

In this chapter the prophet proclaims a message of comfort to God’s people - a proclamation of pardon, deliverance and salvation from the mouth of the Lord, and calls the cities of Judah to behold their God. Behold him as contrasted with all flesh, which is grass. His glory which fills all heaven with ecstatic rapture, contrasted with the glory or goodliness of man, which fades and withers like the flowers of the field. Behold him also as contrasted with the gods of human production, and of these there is a motley diversity. The rich lavish gold out of the bag: “The workman melteth a graven image, and the goldsmith spreadeth it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.” But they are not all of them able to provide for themselves gods of gold, or even silver, and the poor must content themselves with less expensive materials. ‘lie that is so impoverished, that he hath no oblation:” no gold, no silver, nor even brass, or iron, seeks for the most imperishable wood. He “chooseth a tree that will not rot.” The poor as well as the rich betray a fixed design to go

permanently into their idolatry. If they designed their idols only for a season, they would manifest less anxiety for imperishable materials. On these gods they stake their hope for prosperity in this life, and their expectation for immortality in the world to come; they have no other hope for time or eternity. The poor man, if he cannot vie with his aristocratic neighbor in a costly god, still desires to have one that will last long, for he entertains no fear that he will ever require any other. But poor, deluded wretch, where will he find a tree that will not rot? Even the gold, the silver, the costly stones, monopolized by the wealthy, must perish, decay, and final dissolution is indelibly stamped on all earthly things. Still the search for a tree that will not rot is no more vain or delusive than the hope of salvation from any other than the true and living God. But the poor, deluded idolater makes a selection, chooseth a tree, and as this prophet elsewhere describes his folly, he scores and hews the timber, and with a part of it he kindles a fire, cooks his food and warms himself and exultantly says, "Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire;" and with the residue he maketh himself a god, prostrates himself before it, and worships the works of his own hands. He has not the wisdom or sagacity to reason with himself on the absurdity of his course, or to consider that a part of his god he has burned, but vainly relies on the residue of the same tree to be his god.

But all idolatrous worshipers show a decided preference for a splendid kind of religion. Their idol must be dressed up, and decorated, according to the means commanded by the worshipers. "He seeketh unto him a cunning workman to prepare a graven image, that shall not be moved." He desires to make his religion as permanent as possible, and the artist is employed to engrave the block of wood with such devices as may indicate the imaginary attributes which the idolater thinks a god should possess, and to make the figure so imposing in appearance as to fascinate the beholder with

reverence for it, that it may never be superseded or removed from the position assigned by its maker.

How strikingly illustrative is this description of idol-making of the modern forms of idolatry. Those who know not the true God, in setting up their idols will choose the kind of religion which suits best their own fancy, whether it be Pagan, Mohametan, Papal or Protestant, that kind which they imagine will last the longest, or will not rot, and having chosen their tree they look out next to find an artful, cunning theologian, or priest, or clergyman, who has acquired the honors of the academy or college, and studied the art of theological engraving in some worldly school of divinity, to hew and square, rim and engrave his block so as to make it look as nearly as possible like what the idolater thinks religion should be, and to set up such an imaginary god in and over his religion as he fancies a god ought to be. The more cunning and artful the hireling employed may be, the more flattering, in the eyes of the idolater, is the prospect that his god will not be moved; that it will resist the force of truth, withstand the searching glare of light and defy the omnipotence of divine revelation to remove it.

Not only have the polished graduates of theological schools been employed to make false and fashionable religion permanent, and their idol popular, but they often invoke the aid of kings and potentates of the earth, and rely upon the arm of human power to establish their god where they choose to place him. The fiery oven of the king of Babylon was but a type of the cruel persecution resorted to by all manner of false religionists and deluded will-worshipers to establish their gods and their idolatry.

One thing is very clear in the history of idolatry in all ages of the world: no system of false religion has ever set up a god that was able to rule or govern its worshipers; all idol gods

must act only as they are acted upon. The Arminian's god is supposed to work only by means and instrumentalities; he can absolutely save no one without their consent and cooperation. The modern missionary god can only go to heathen lands as he is carried there by his agents; he has not funds except they be supplied by the liberality of men; no men competent to execute his desires unless they be qualified and furnished by his devotees. He is said to desire to do much, but is overruled, restricted, kept back and retarded by the apathy and covetousness of capitalists on whom he depends. These fashionable gods cannot foreknow, predestinate or do their pleasure (if they have any) either in the armies of heaven or among the inhabitants of earth. But what a contrast! "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God!" How vast the contrast, how amazing the difference! "Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd [not be led by his flock], he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom." He does not depend on them to carry him, nor leave them to perish in their wanderings, nor to hold on to him, or fall from grace and perish. Yea, he "shall gently lead those that are with young." He will not be led by them, nor by any other beings or influences. It is the God of Zion, "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." Well may the prophet, by the word of the Lord, demand, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him?" We know who directs the gods of human production, and who are their counselors; we know who mark out the work, make the calculations, pass their resolutions, and then bid their gods

follow up with blessings what they have projected; who tell their gods when to come, where to go, what to do and how to do it. But, "With whom took he [Zion's God] counsel, and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" 'have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundation of the earth? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing: he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity." "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." The decree has gone forth from the throne of God, saying, "They shall go to confusion together that are makers of idols. But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end."

Then, brethren, lift up the voice with strength, and say to the cities of Judah, Behold thy God.

"This awful God is ours,
Our Father and our love;

He shall send down his heavenly power,
And carry us above.”

Middletown, N.Y.,
March 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 329 – 334

ISAIAH XLII. 3

“A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.”

By comparing this prediction with Matthew xii. 18-20, it will be clearly manifest that this prediction was of the Mediatorial work of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Servant upheld by the Godhead, and the embodiment of the elect in whom God delighteth, embracing all his members, both of the Jews and of the Gentiles. In the immediate connection of this text God commanded Israel by the prophet Isaiah, saying, “Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cried, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. The bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.” &c. In Matthew these words are rendered us, “That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul as well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment on to victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.” The glorious Son of God, who, in his own self-existent power and Godhead, is the supreme Sovereign over all beings, all worlds and all the events, who being in his Mediatorial glory in the form of God, thinks it not robbery to be equal with God, in his incarnation made himself of no reputation, but took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, “was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death,” and as a servant, who has learned obedience, came in the flesh to do the will of the Father, and

to finish the work assigned him, in fulfilling the law, bearing the whole tempest of wrath that was due for the transgressions of all his members, which were laid on him. Though humbled thus, and in his humiliation made even lower than the angels, he could not fail nor be discouraged in his Mediatorial work, for his eternal Deity was mantled in a vail of his flesh, and he was upheld by his own indwelling Godhead. The spirit of the Lord God was upon him, because as the Mediator between God and man, he was anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." – Isa. lxi. 1-3. Thus presented in prophecy, and thus manifested now in the gospel, Israel, the spiritual Israel now, beholds the servant in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead, upheld by his indwelling Deity, as perfectly identified with his elect members, in whom God is well pleased, as with his eternal Father. Now in the gospel he is beheld as prophecy described him, both negatively and affirmatively. We are told how he should not, as well as how he should, up here; what he should not, as well as what he should, do. "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." "He shall not fail nor be discouraged." But he *shall* be upheld and sustained by the Godhead. "He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." "He shall set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law." Of him the prophet continues in the verse immediately following, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold by hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the

people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. I am the Lord: that is my name: and mine glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images."

It is worthy of our special and grateful observance that in the testimony of Isaiah the prophet, God has identified Israel, his peculiar people, with our Lord Jesus Christ in his Mediatorial relation to them as his elect, and whom his soul delighteth, using the same appellative terms of recognition; personally of Christ, as the head and embodiment of all his members, "My servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." And in chapter xliv. 1, 2, "O Jacob, my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen," or elected: "Fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen." And the figure's of a bruised reed and smoking flax may forcibly illustrate the extreme sufferings of Christ in the body of his flesh, and the weakness of his humanity, in which he was upheld and sustained by his indwelling Godhead; and also the perishing condition of God's chosen people, from which they are redeemed and delivered by and through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The same prophet predicted of him that he should grow up as a tender plant, and "As many were astonished and thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men," "Surely he hath borne our Greeks and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was BRUISED for our iniquities." "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him." As a tender yet bruised plant, he was like a bruised reed, yet upheld by his eternal power and Godhead, he was not broken; he did not fail, nor was he discouraged. The figure of smoking flax is supposed to be taken from the flaxen wick of a candle, or lamp, when the oil is about exhausted, smoking in its faint and

languishing glimmerings, and to all appearance ready to die out. So we trace the application of the figure to our dear suffering Redeemer, "Who, in the days of his flesh, when he had offered a prayers and supplications, with strong crying in tears, unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard, and that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all that obey him." – Heb. v. 7-9. Like a bruised reed or tender plant, scourged and crowned with thorns in the hall of Pilate, then fainting under the crushing weight of the ponderous cross, than baring his breast to the sword of divine justice and the agony of that dreadful hour, when he trod the wine press almighty wrath, "with strength enough, but none to spare;" and did he not been appear truly has a bruised reed?

And when the burning wrath of law and justice consumed his life, drank up his blood, and poured out his soul unto death, when his soul was exceeding sorrowful, and when in agonizing sweat and blood he cried, Father, save me from this hour! and on the cross transfixed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" what could more fit the describe the scene than the last flickering, up dying, smoking glimmerings of an exhausted lamp? But he was heard, and that he feared; yea, he was heard by him who was able to, and who did indeed, save him from death, and brought him up, in his resurrection from its dark and gloomy power, to live and reign in all the power of his resurrection as the Prince of life and glory. Far indeed from quenching the power of that endless life by which he holds his endless priesthood, he conquered when he fell.

"He died, and in that dreadful night
Did all the powers of hell destroy;

Rising, he brought our heaven to light,
And took possession of the joy.”

Notwithstanding the dreadful conflict, the bruised reed, the smoking flax, the marred visage, the reed was not broken, his flesh saw no correction, the ardor of his burning love was not quenched. He did not fail, nor was he discouraged. He triumphed gloriously, and has brought forth judgment unto truth, and the isles shall wait for his law. All power is in his hands, and all things are put under him.

But unto all his redeemed members it is given of his behalf, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer with him. They all must know him, not only in the power of his resurrection, but also in the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conformed to his death. As in the visage of his fleshly body he was marred and bruised, so in his mystical body and members his visage is so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of man. From the days of righteous Abel, God’s people have been a poor, afflicted, bruised and persecuted people. “In afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report, as to see verse, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many in rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” Such has been the condition and peculiar characteristics of the people of God in all ages. In themselves considered, they are like the frail reed that is bruised, and easily shaken, having no power in themselves to resist the strong winds or swelling waves that beat upon them, into which they seem continually exposed.

But as God is in Christ, so Christ is in the church; therefore she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early.

We see the national Israel under the old covenant, which was weak through the flesh, having no power to heal the bruises of those who had transgressed its precepts, like a bruised reed, expos to the tempest of divine wrath, with dark forebodings, and a fearful looking for a judgment and fiery indignation; how welcome was the prophetic assurance that the bruised from reed should not be broken, that the scepter should not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh should come, and turn away on godliness from Jacob. There was a blessing in the cluster, like the new wine in the great, and it could not be destroyed. The judgment, or purpose, promises, counsel and decrees of God must first be fulfilled, and judgment brought forth in triumph unto truth; or, as we understand this declaration, the old dispensation must be continued unto the purpose and promise of God to bring seed added Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of his mountain, should be fulfilled. That generation could not pass away until all these things were accomplished. And although the portentous cloud of impending destruction had long been accumulating, and the beauty of Israel had become as a fading flower, and the old covenant had waxed old and was ready to vanish, yet before it can pass away a remnant according to the election of grace must be plucked out from them as a brand from the consuming fire. The smoking flax should not be cleansed into all the gracious promises of God should be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but every jot and tittle of all that was written in the law and in the prophets must first be fulfilled, and he in whose name the Gentiles shall trust should send forth judgment and a victory.

Again, the figure's of the bruised reed and smoking flax are peculiarly illustrative of the gracious dealings of God with his children, as manifested in their personal and individual experience. When first brought by the quickening spirit of God to a sense of their lost and helpless condition, when the commandment comes to them in all its terrors, when the law enters and their sins abound, and they see and feel themselves justly convicted and righteously condemned before the bar of inflexible justice, how like a bruised, crushed, weak and powerless we'd they seem to be. Stripped of all their former boasted power and free agency, like the tremblingly did shaken by the win, they can see no way to avert the tempest of almighty wrath which seems to them inevitable; until Christ is revealed by his spirit to them and all his power to save, they are as powerless as the crushed and bruised reed. But he comes to them, not to execute on them that curses of the law, but to perform that gracious work assigned him in the seventh verse of this chapter; not to break the bruised, helpless reed, but to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to comfort all that mourn. Glorious Redeemer! Precious Savior! What glad tidings he brings to the meek! What beauty for ashes! What joy for having us! The flickering, dying hope for mercy that trembled in the heaving breast is not extinguished or quenched in endless night, are raised to a joyful flame. The love of God is shed abroad in the heart, slavish fear is cast out, the burden of guilt is removed, and now, instead of a bruised reed, a tree if righteousness appears, and instead of dread despair, Christ is formed in the heart as the hope of Glory.

Nor is it alone in the first and early experience of the redeem people of our God that Christ appears thus precious unto them; for in all their afflictions he is afflicted, and the angel

of his presence saves them. While here in the flesh, like feeble reeds, they are bruised, and like smoking flax, their hope and patience decline until but a spark still lingers; but he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. “He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” – Isa. xl. 29-31

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 22
November 15, 1880

ISAIAH 43:3,4

(Reply to G. W. Cottrell)

"For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior. I gave Egypt for thy ransom; Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou wast honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee and people for thy life."

REPLY: The particular enquiry is, What is the gift, and to whom given? The special sovereign and discriminating love of God to Israelis exemplified and demonstrated by the wonderful deliverances which God has wrought for them at sundry times and places. National Israel is the type of the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as God gave Egypt for the ransom of the Hebrews, when for their deliverance the hosts of Pharaoh perished in the Red Sea. For the temporal salvation of the Hebrews, God gave Egypt to be destroyed. In this case Egypt was the gift given by the sin-avenging God to the sword of justice and wrath. Ethiopia and Seba were the descendants of Ham, given with their descendants throughout all time, by the prophetic curse of Noah against Ham, or Canaan, to be servants of servants to the descendants of Shem and Japheth forever. Thus in the division of the families of the earth God has been specially gracious to Israel. 'When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. 32:8,9) Ethiopia and Seba were thus given to be servants to Israel; as the descendants of Shem, as well as to those of the posterity of Japheth. And in the descendants of Cush, from whom Ethiopia and Seba proceeded, are included all those nations

which occupied Palestine. The Canaanites, the Hitites, Jebuzites, and all others of the descendants of Ham, were given to the sword for the sake of Israel, that Israel might go in and possess the land. Even the Gibeonites, who by stratagem obtained a treaty with Joshua that they should be permitted to remain in the land, were nevertheless given, according to the prophecy of Noah, to be servants, and employed as hewers of wood and drawers of water, for Israel. And in many subsequent wars the descendants of Ham were routed and put to flight before Israel, until ultimately driven into Africa.

We have confined our remarks in this reply to our correspondent principally to his two questions, viz: What was given? and to whom?

Many reflections are suggested on this subject.

First - If the decree of Almighty God, dooming the posterity of Canaan, has prevailed, and successfully resisted the combined powers of so many nations, in holding them where they were placed by the curse of Noah, will the fiat of our government to liberate them from that decree and to elevate them to a level with the posterities of Shem and Japheth be more successful?

Second - As God gave Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba for Israel, in the type, will he not ultimately destroy every weapon that is formed against Zion, and give to utter destruction all the powers of this world, who dare oppose the cause and people of the living God? As he gave Egypt to be destroyed in the sea, and Ethiopia and Seba were driven out to make room for the Hebrews, may we not confidently believe that, even so will he do for his peculiar people - the people whom he hath chosen for himself, and which he claims as the lot of his inheritance, and of whom he has said, “Touch not mine

anointed, and do my prophets no harm: for he that toucheth them, toucheth the apple of mine eye." (Psa. 105:15) This Psalm presents the full answer to the enquiries of our friend, and we request our readers to turn to it.

Third - Our subject suggests the sovereign, discriminating love of the eternal God to his chosen heritage, unto whom he says, "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life."

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 188 - 190

ISAIAH 45:7

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things (Isaiah 45:7)."

Our esteemed brother, Elder George Cottrell of Ohio, has requested our views on the above text, especially on the *creation of evil.*

Preceding this text, the prophet by the word of the Lord reproved the people of Israel for their propensity to idolatry, and after showing the vanity and extreme folly of trusting in the works of their own hands, presented a powerful contrast between the gods which are made and worshipped by men, and the true and living God who created and upholds all things by the omnipotence of his power and wisdom of his counsel. In drawing the contrast, God by his prophet shows first what their idols cannot do: they cannot save their worshipers, nor afford them the slightest aid, they cannot see, hear or feel, nor can they move themselves, and one of the most important deficiencies is that they cannot declare beforehand events which shall come to pass. And as there are no predestinating idols, so there are no predestinarian idolaters. After showing the vanity of idols, the peculiar attributes and perfections of the true God are very clearly declared and demonstrated by his wonderful works in the creation of the world, by his providential government of all worlds, all beings and all events. "Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient time the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." In illustration of this, he calls their attention especially to the case of Cyrus, whom he had raised up, and whose right hand he had holden, or strengthened, to subdue nations before him, to loosen the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates of Babylon. To whom also

he said, I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight, and break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron. Even this heathen prince was raised up by our God for Jacob, his servant's sake, and Israel, his elect, and called by his name and surnamed by the Lord of whom he was ignorant. Of Cyrus he saith, "I am the Lord and there is none else: there is no God besides me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me; that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none besides me. I form the light, and I create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." While heathen mythology supposes a god to preside over each of the several elements of nature, one to control whatever is good, and others to direct the evils, the Lord Jehovah declares himself the only wise God, reigning in the heavens alone, and swaying the sceptre of universal control over all things. All holy beings are moved by him, and devils and wicked men restrained by the supreme power of his might. God makes known, as in the case of Cyrus, from the rising of the sun to the far distant west, and from the rivers to earth's remotest bounds, that there is no other God ruling in the armies of heaven, and over the inhabitants of earth. How grand and magnificent are the evidences and exemplifications of his eternal power and God-head, as presented in the context, in connection with which the declaration in our text must be considered. "I form the light." Of the formation of light no finite mind can attain to an adequate conception, nor do we perceive in it any formation. We have been astonished to learn from the sacred record of the creation of this world, that God spake the word and it stood fast; he commanded, and it was done. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." And God separated the light from the darkness; and the light he called day, and the darkness he called night. Could any other than the true God have performed this? So also in the spiritual application of the word. "God who commanded the light to shine out of

darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” By the formation of light we not only understand that God created it in the natural world, but gave it form when he embodied the fullness of it in the great light which he suspended in the infinity of space, and bade it pour forth its fullest radiance on the earth, to rule the day, and by the shadow of the intervening earth he created the darkness, which he called night, thus separating the one from the other, and claiming both as creatures of his almighty power. The moon and stars he also made as reflectors of the light of the sun, and for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years (Genesis 1:14).

In the new, or spiritual, creation *light* and immortal life are synonymous terms. This light emanates from God who dwells in the eternal refulgence of his own supreme glory. The formation of light and immortality of eternal deity is by revelation brought to the view of our faith, only in him who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, who is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person: the image of the invisible God. For in him was life, and the life was the light of men. He is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light; the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings; the light which came to Zion when the glory of the Lord had arisen upon her. In the infinity of the glorious gospel of the grace of God, in the spiritual firmament of his church hath God set a tabernacle for the sun which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof (Psalm 19:1-6). This light of immortality shines in the hearts of God’s children because God has taken his abode in them, and has made them the children of the light. Like the moon, the church of Christ

when her light is come, or when out of Zion the perfection of beauty God is pleased to shine, she reflects this light, as a city set upon a hill whose light cannot be concealed. So also are the members of Christ and ministers of his word and truth, the children whom God has given to his Son, for signs and for wonders, and they are twinkling reflectors of the light of the Sun of Righteousness, as stars in the right hand of him who holds the keys of death and hell. God forms this spiritual light in all who are born of his Spirit, and in all its variety of forms in which it shines upon his chosen Israel.

And I create darkness. Darkness is simply the absence of light. In the natural creation, the earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the great deep until God formed the light, so darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people, until God said, Let there be light! Then leaping forth from his chambers, the Sun of Righteousness sprang into the firmament of his church, scattered the sable cloud, dispelled the horrid gloom, and scattered round his kingdom the refulgence of celestial day. This is the day which the Lord hath made and over which he is the great ruling light. But how does God create darkness, or absence of light? In nature it is simply by the revolution of the earth, by which earth's shadow falls upon us, and the light is hidden from our eyes, then with us it is night, wherein the psalmist says, "All the beasts of the forest do creep forth." So when earth, or earthly things, are suffered to separate between us and the Sun of Righteousness, we also walk in darkness and have no light. In the fifteenth verse of this same chapter it is said, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior." It is his beams that form our light, and if he hides them from us, we are left in darkness, and it is thus all our darkness is created.

I make peace and create evil. By *peace and evil,* we understand his providential judgments in dealing with his

people, and with the children of men: presiding in power and majesty over all the works of his hands. He makes peace in silencing the raging elements of nature, as when the Redeemer commanded the tempest to be still, in providence when he curbs the angry passions of princes, kings and potentates of the earth. “Come,” says the psalmist, “behold the works of the Lord; what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder, he burneth the chariot in the fire (Psalm 46:8,9).” And in the kingdom of the saints, he is our peace. The Prince of Peace, who has reconciled us to God, and made peace by the blood of his cross. Experimentally God’s children learn that all their spiritual peace and comfort cometh down from God our Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. “There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God.” But, “Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them.” All the peace which Christians can enjoy in time or in eternity is made by him. In the world, says Jesus to his disciples, ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. But our brother desires us to dwell more particularly on the *creation of evil.* We are aware of the difficulty arising in the minds of God’s little ones upon this subject. That God is a being of infinite perfection, spotless purity, who cannot look on sin with approbation, is as he has revealed himself unto them; but how he at the same time can be the creator of evil is hard for them to conceive. There is a mystery of Godliness and a mystery of iniquity in both of which God will be glorified. We all readily admit that God is the sole creator of all things that exist in heaven, earth and hell. And in his creation he has presented to our wondering eyes an endless variety. We can hardly conceive of any being or thing now existing that has not its opposite. The serpent and the dove, angels of light and angels of the bottomless pit, light and darkness, heat and cold, good and evil: and is there anything existing that God has not made? He has created all things for

himself, even the wicked for the day of evil. In all the creation God has made nothing that can bear a comparison with himself. His creatures are not gods. None of them possess as creatures his peculiar attributes or perfections. Yet all things are and were created for his pleasure, and he is above them all, and will bend them all to his government. In the sublime language of Job, "He stretcheth out the North over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He compassed the waters with bounds, until the day and night come to an end. The pillars of heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power who can understand (Job 26:7,10,11,13,14)."

But the term *evil* as used in our text we understand to mean judgments, calamities, afflictions and chastisements which are sent upon the children of men. They come not up out of the ground, nor do they fall upon us by chance. God's careful providence watches over us, and no evil can come nigh our dwelling except meted out in weight and measure, time, duration and result, by the unerring wisdom and power of God himself. As it is written, "Is there evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" Job said, "Shall we receive good from the Lord, and not evil?" That is, shall we receive prosperity, and not adversity, pleasure and not pain, joy and not sorrow? Wars, famine, and pestilence are evils, which come and go at God's command. And persecution and oppression are under his control. Men are used by him as his sword and his hand; devils and wicked men are restrained or suffered to vent their malice, as God ordains. And under this conviction we are instructed to pray God to, "Lead us not into temptation, but to deliver us from evil," and to shield us in the day of evil. As in our text light is contrasted with darkness, so is evil contrasted with peace. "I make *peace* and create *evil."* By

withholding peace and bringing evil upon them, that is. The Israelites received evil at the hand of the Lord for their rebellion and idolatry when he sent fiery serpents into their camps, and when he caused their enemies to triumph over them. And so in his dealings with his children, sometimes he sends on them fiery trials, deep afflictions, sore temptations which disturb their peace, and bring labor, sorrow and grief upon them for the trial of their faith, and as chastisement for their faults.

"*I the Lord do all these things."* This is consoling to the afflicted saints who have confidence in God. They know what he appoints for them is best, though it may call them to pass through flames or floods, for they know that all things work together for good to them, and they are led to say, "It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good;" for so said Eli, when the Lord brought evil on him and upon his sons.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 1, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 143 - 148

ISAIAH 45:19

Brother Beebe: When you have leisure, please give your views on Isaiah 45:19, the middle clause in particular.

Yours in Christian love and esteem,
Mary J. Eddy.

With great pleasure we comply with the request of our esteemed correspondent, being ready at all times to give such views as we have on the Scriptures to all who desire to know the truth as it is in Jesus. The text proposed reads thus: “I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth: I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right.” Holy men of old have written the Scriptures as they were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and we are told that God spake to the fathers by the prophets, from which we infer the importance of every part of the inspired volume, but when passages are marked like the one proposed for our present consideration, as coming so immediately from the mouth of God, they seem to claim, from those who fear him, their most profound attention. This text is specially prefaced in the context by these remarkable words: “For thus saith the Lord.” This is a sufficient cause for reverential and solemn reflection, but to increase our awe and to prostrate our souls in the most humble and devout attitude, to wait with breathless silence for the words which proceed from his mouth, it is added, “For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else.” What power has he displayed in the creation of the heavens and earth, and how successfully has he executed his predestinated design that the earth should be inhabited.

Truly he whose designs can never be frustrated, whose purpose shall stand and who will do all his pleasure, has the right to declare, as in this case, "I am the Lord, and there is none else." Our destiny for time and eternity is in his hand; no power can successfully compete with him. He is of one mind, and none can turn him.

"The heavens above, the earth below,
Thee, Lord, their great possessor know;
By thee this orb to being rose,
And all that nature's bounds inclose.

From thee, amid the aerial space,
The North and South assume their place;
'Tis thine the ocean's rage to guide,
And calm at will its swelling tide."

"I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth." That is, in the calling of Jacob, and in bidding his seed to seek him. Let us consider,

1. Jacob and his seed. Jacob as the father of his chosen tribes was a type of Christ, in whom all the election of grace is embodied. All the natural descendants of Jacob were chosen in him and set apart as a peculiar people in distinction from all other tribes of the earth, and embraced in the legal covenant, in which all the privileges of the law of a carnal commandment were secured to them before any of them were born. So all the spiritual family or seed of Christ were chosen in him as the antitype of Jacob before the world began, and embraced in the everlasting covenant of life and peace which is ordered in all things and sure. So clearly does this typical relationship appear in the Scriptures, that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ is frequently in the New Testament called Israel, the seed of Jacob, the twelve tribes of Israel, etc., and although we are informed that they were

not all Israel which were of Israel (that is, Israel after the flesh), "Neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed (Romans 9:7,8)."

2. The doctrine of the special election of grace is by divine authority illustrated by the discriminating grace of God bestowed on Jacob, irrespective of any work, good or bad, on his part. "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand." God's purpose must always stand in all cases, for he doeth his pleasure in heaven and on earth, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. But that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, - how? In what manner must his purpose stand? "Not of works, but of him that calleth." This then was the object of God in conforming the type to the thing signified, to show that the election of grace stands not according to works, but of him that calleth; so the case of Jacob and Esau was irrevocably fixed and unalterably settled before the children were born or had done any good or evil, and this figure the apostle assures us was thus arranged to show that the election of God's people in Christ was prior to their birth, and irrespective of their good or bad works, and wholly governed by the sovereign will of God who calleth (Romans 9:11,13). "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began (II Timothy 1:9)." "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8,9)." This doctrine of discriminating grace is clearly indicated in the prophetic application of the names Jacob and Israel. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he

that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine (Isaiah 43:1).” “Yet now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel whom I have chosen (or elected), (Isaiah 44:1).” “Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles (Isaiah 42:1).”

3. The open and manifest calling of Jacob, as signifying the clear and open calling and salvation of God’s spiritual Israel. “I have not spoken in secret, in a dark place of the earth.” Upon this subject what has ever been more clearly manifested?

A. The calling of Jacob personally to seek his face, instead of hiding or disguising his calling as a secret matter, as we have seen he declared it to Rebecca before the children were born, and in all his providential dealings with him, causing him to inherit the blessing of the firstborn in Isaac’s family, in shielding him from the wrath of Esau, in giving him favor with Laban, and in finally bringing him to the place of his nativity with great riches, all of which presents him as the type of him of whom the psalmist says, “He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him (Psalm 126:6).”

B. In his calling as the type of the election of grace Moses thus testified: “For the Lord’s portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye (Deuteronomy 32:9,10).” This was not done secretly, for in the same chapter heaven and earth are summoned as witnesses of this distinguishing grace. “Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of

my mouth.” This was not speaking in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth, but before high heaven and the listening earth. Thus openly the proclamation of Jacob’s calling is made. The fathers, the ancient patriarchs, were advised of all this; it was no secret. “Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.” What will they tell thee? They will tell thee this: “When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel (Deuteronomy 32:7,8).” So far from concealing his special favor to Israel, he is seen riding upon the heaven in their help and in his excellency on the sky.

C. The calling of Jacob out of Egypt was no secret event. All the wonders of our God were executed. His arm was made bare in the eyes of the nations, and all the ends of the earth saw the salvation of our God. With a high hand and an outstretched arm the yoke of Egypt was broken, and so clearly visible was the display of his almighty power in calling Jacob then to look to him alone for deliverance and protection that it is said even, “The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee; they were afraid: the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron (Psalm 77:16-20).” He rebuked strong nations for the sake of Jacob, and finally made public the entrance of his chosen tribes into the land of Canaan, all of which abundantly proves that in the calling of Jacob to seek his face, God spake not in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth.

D. So in the application of these types and shadows to the spiritual Israel of God, in their high and holy vocation, God's voice has been clearly heard. The fact their calling had been prefigured in all the types, and emphatically declared by all the prophets from the days of Abel, shows that God did not design to conceal his purpose in their calling.

Not in secret, nor in a dark place of the earth, was the calling of the spiritual Israel of our God when they were saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ before the world began. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8:29,30)." Thus it is seen that the calling of God's people in Christ in this election and predestination to glory was not in any dark place of the earth, but in a radiant blaze of refulgent glory. The calling of the Israel of God experimentally is open, manifest and irresistible. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (II Corinthians 4:6)." The calling of the Israel of God from the bondage of the law, the guilt of sin, and from the power of darkness into God's marvelous light, is witnessed in the triumph of our Redeemer in his resurrection, in which he spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of them openly. Having abolished death, he brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (II Timothy 1:10).

E. The infallible certainty that the calling of God's chosen Israel is and forever shall be effectual. "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." This very declaration

implies, first, that God has said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me, and second, that his word to that end is not in vain.

In this same chapter, verse 22, he reiterates this command, saying, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.” As none but God can save a sinner, and as there is no other God, it is vain to look for salvation from any other source. All other powers in heaven and earth combined could not save a single soul, could not deliver from wrath, purge from guilt, quicken from death or translate from the power of darkness any of the seed of Jacob. For their salvation is of me, saith the Lord. In this chapter the scattered condition of the seed of Jacob, as spread over the entire surface of the earth, and extending to earth’s remotest bounds, is alluded to in the twentieth verse, and they are informed that wooden gods or other dumb idols cannot save them. “But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not; for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West.” How? “I will say to the North, Give up; and to the South, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him (Isaiah 43:1-7).” “To give drink to my people, my chosen. This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise (Isaiah 43:20,21).” These

Scriptures show beyond all reasonable doubt that the seed of Jacob in our text is the Lord's people, who by the absolute decree of the unchangeable God shall be gathered and shall every one of them be brought from the ends of the earth, and shall shew forth God's praise. This decree, though offensive to men and devils, is not to be concealed nor kept in the dark, for God has spoken and proclaimed it before heaven and earth. His word goeth forth from his mouth in righteousness, and shall not return void of the work whereunto he has sent it; it shall prosper in the accomplishment of all his pleasure. This word going forth is all the seed of Israel, scattered though they be to the ends of the earth, shall find out every one of them to whom he has directed it, and in this word he says to them, even to every one of them, "Seek ye me." This fiat from the throne of God shall be effectual, it cannot fail, it has not been spoken in vain. We are aware that these words of our God, and those also in verse 22 of the same chapter, are treated as mere invitations, but let it be known to all men, the Lord God of Israel deals not in invitations. Where a king's word is there is power, and our God is a great King, and his kingdom ruleth over all. He speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done.

'Firm are the words his prophets give,
Sweet words on which his children live;
Each of them is the voice of God,
Who spake, and spread the heavens abroad.

Each of them powerful as that sound
Which bid the new made world go round,
And stronger than the solid poles
On which the wheel of nature rolls."

But we would call the attention of our sister to the efficiency of this saying of God especially: "I said not unto the seed of

Jacob, Seek ye me in vain," for the power and efficiency of these words are established by the solemn oath of God that they shall not fail, for he adds, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come: and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed." Every knee and tongue of whom, according to this oath, shall bow and swear allegiance to the Lord Almighty? The knee and tongue of every one of the seed of Jacob, whom he has commanded to seek his face. For he further says, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." ·We cannot doubt nor dispute the power and omnipotence of the words thus spoken by the Lord to the seed of Jacob without involving the sin of blasphemy. God, who cannot lie, has not only said that his word shall secure the accomplishment of his order, but he has confirmed it by an oath. To contradict is then to not only charge God with falsehood, but also with perjury. When the Lord, by his Spirit, applies these words to any of the seed of Jacob, God is himself in his word to make it effectual. David, in Psalm 27:8, testifies to the power of God's word in its application to him: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." For David was one of the seed of Jacob to whom the words were not spoken in vain, and as it was in the case of David, so shall it be with all the seed of Jacob, even every one of them, for God, who cannot lie, has sworn it. They shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. "My sheep [says the good Shepherd] hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Men, even mighty men, kings and potentates of the earth, may fail to make their words effectual, but God says, I the Lord speak righteousness; I declare things that are right. Should God be

disappointed in the effect of his word in the accomplishment of his designs, that would not be speaking in righteousness, for there would be a failure, something wrong. When he said, “Let there be light,” if light had not come forth at his bidding there would have been a failure; but when he said, “Let there be light,” and when he said to the seed of Jacob, “Seek ye me,” instead of uttering an invitation, or an uncertain mandate, he called the words so uttered a declaration. “I declare things that are right,” and so the sequel shall show, for not one of the seed of Jacob, which for multitude is like the sands of the seashore, shall fail to respond as did David, “Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” Let the children but know that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken and they can live on every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, for the word of our God endureth forever.

“He looks, and ten thousands of angels rejoice,
And myriads wait for his word;
He speaks, and eternity filled with his voice,
Reechoes the praise of her Lord.”

Middletown, N.Y.
July 15, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 208 - 215

ISAIAH 45:23

Brother Beebe: - I have been a subscriber for your paper four years, and I how feel unwilling to deny myself the luxury it affords, especially in these trying times, for it contains all the preaching I have, except that which is devoted to the do and live system. May you be continued long to publish the "Signs of the Times", and fear not to declare the whole counsel of God.

Please give your views on Isaiah 45:23, and oblige,
Yours, etc.
Benjamin Luellen.
Howard Co., Ia., Jan. 25, 1864.

REPLY: - The text proposed for consideration and comment reads thus: "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return. That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

How amazing the thought that the great and terrible God, who created all beings and all worlds, and who holds the destiny of all things in his sovereign hand, whose every word demands our most profound attention and implicit belief should condescend to confirm any of his declarations by a solemn oath. To even doubt his veracity in anything he has ever said involves the sin of blasphemy. He commands and it stands fast: He speaks and it is done. He is the God who cannot lie, for it is incompatible with his very nature. He is the God of truth. "Let the potsherds strive with the potsherds of the earth;" but "Wo unto him that striveth with his Maker." If to discredit what God has spoken be a crime of such fearful magnitude, how terrible must be the doom of those who will virtually charge him with perjury, by contradicting what he has confirmed by his oath. Men verily swear by the greater, and to them an oath for confirmation is an end of all strife.

But our God, because he could swear by no greater has sworn by himself. There cannot possibly be anything so high, so sacred, or so holy as himself, and his holiness is pledged by his oath.

"The words his sacred lips declare,
Of his own mind the image bear;
What should him tempt, from frailty free,
Blest in his self sufficiency?

He will not his great self deny,
A God all truth can never lie:
As well might he his being quit
As break his oath, or word forget.

Let frightened rivers change their course,
Or backward hasten *to* their source;
Swift through the air let rocks be hurled,
And mountains like the chaff be whirled.

Let suns and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies;
Let heaven and earth both pass away,
Eternal Truth shall ne'er decay."

"The word has gone out of my mouth in righteousness and shall not return." What the immutable God has said cannot be recalled, unsaid or countermanded; nor is there any need to recall what he has said, for it has gone forth from his mouth in righteousness. If right that it should be spoken, it would be wrong to recall it. Princes and potentates of the earth may send forth decrees which they would gladly recall, as when Darius made a decree that any man that should for thirty days ask a petition of any God, or man, save of him, he should be cast into the den of lions, when he saw that his decree had not gone forth in righteousness - that he had

been imposed upon by his nobility - how gladly would he have recalled the decree, if he had possessed power to cause it to return, come back, or be unmade. What has gone forth from the mouth of God can be liable to no unforeseen consequences - it must prosper in the thing whereunto He has sent it; therefore there can be no necessity for revoking, calling back, or causing His word to return to Him. “For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it.” (Isa. 55:11,12) Was ever a shower of rain intercepted in its course, when descending from the heavens, and sent back by any human, or creature, agency? When God unstops the bottles of heaven, can earth forbid, or prevent, the rain, or snow, from falling to the earth? Who, then, can resist the execution of the strong decrees of the Almighty God. The power, the omnipotence, of his word has been tested. His word went forth in the creation of the universe.

“He call’d the world from emptiness;
The world obeyed, and came.”

God said “Let there be light, and there was light.” He said, “Let us make man,” and man was made. “For this they are willingly ignorant of, that by the Word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” (II Peter 3:5-7)

Having briefly considered the awful and sacred import of the oath of the immutable God, and the omnipotence of his word, as securing beyond the possibility of any failure, the accomplishment of its mission, we will now call the attention of the readers to the declaration of God thus solemnly attested in our text:-"That unto me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear." The irrevocable word and oath of God has gone forth from his mouth in righteousness, pledging the truth and holiness of Jehovah in solemn confirmation of the declarations immediately connected with and embraced in the text.

1. That none but God can save a sinner: that he is God, and beside him there is no Savior. That he, the Lord, is God, and there is none else; a just God and a Savior, there is none beside him. All other beings, works or things relied on for salvation are idols; and all who depend on anything but God alone for justification and salvation are makers of idols, and, as God is true, they shall all go to confusion together.

2. This only true, almighty and unchangeable God who is the just God and Savior, and there is none else, has called all the seed of Jacob to seek his face: saying to that seed, in all the omnipotence of his word which created the word and sustains all things, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." And this order from his eternal throne has not been given in vain. His word has gone out of his mouth in righteousness and shall not be recalled or suffered to return void of the work whereunto he has sent it. He said not to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face in vain. Though his omniscient eye could see that seed intermingled with all the tribes of mankind like sheep going astray, and wandering to the utmost extremities of the earth, yet - Isaiah 52:10 - "The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." The words, "All ye ends of

the earth," and "All the ends of the earth," are applied to the scattered sheep of Israel whom our Lord has redeemed out of every kindred, language and tribe under heaven, and to none else, for if those declarations embraced all the inhabitants of the world, they would secure the salvation of all the human family, whereas God has sworn that some of them shall go to confusion together; "but Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." See verses 16 and 17 of this same chapter. The words *all ye ends of the earth,* no more necessarily include others of the human family beside the Israel saved in the Lord, than they do all the beasts, fowls and fishes contained in the world. The whole provision of mercy and salvation proclaimed in this chapter is clearly applied exclusively to the seed of Jacob, for God has said, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Israel shall be saved in the Lord: but they shall all be confounded and all go to confusion together who depend for salvation on anything short of God himself; whether it be on their own works, or the works of others, for it is the essence of idolatry to depend for salvation on anything but on God alone, or to attribute to any other being or thing that which belongs alone to God; for he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise unto graven images.

3. The irresistible power of that word which has gone forth in righteousness from the mouth of God commanding efficaciously all the seed of Jacob to seek his face for salvation, and to look to him as the only just God and Savior, shall, according to the oath of God, secure the submission and allegiance of every one of them. Every knee shall bow in humble submission to God, their Savior. God will himself secure this: for he will make his people willing in the day of his power, and they shall come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt,

and shall worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem. Unto him then according to the word of his oath shall every knee, of all the seed of Jacob, bow; for he will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name - for I have created him for my glory: I have formed him, yea I have made him. The arrows of the Lord are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under him. However distant, they shall be brought nigh; however stubborn, they shall be humbled; however rebellious they shall bow the knee to him, when he shall call them by his grace, every one that is called by his name, shall hear his voice, and they that hear shall live. He will take away their stony heart and give them a heart of flesh. He will fill them with contrition, and give them that repentance which is unto life, which needeth not to be repented of. The failure of one single knee of all who are now embraced in the word of his oath, would involve his truth. But why should we argue this point: has not the mouth of God spoken it? Has not the sacred oath of the immutable Jehovah confirmed the irrevocable decree? What then if infidels dispute, they cannot change the thing that has gone out of his mouth in righteousness.

While every bending knee of all the seed of God's spiritual or anti-typical Israel shall signify their hearts subdued by sovereign grace and their unreserved submission to God as the only Savior, their oath shall signify their full allegiance to him as their rightful sovereign.

This perfect subjugation of all the redeemed family to their God and Savior is referred to by Paul, Rom. 14:11, and Phil. 2:10,11. In both of which the inspired apostle establishes the final, perfect and everlasting subjugation and submission of all the seed of Jacob, and the fulfillment of the word of the

oath and promise of that that, All Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation, that he shall not be ashamed nor confounded in a world without end, while all who are the makers of idols shall with equal certainty go to confusion together. “In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.” Thus abundantly demonstrating that in the holy calling of his chosen people, he said not to the seed of Jacob, “Seek ye my face, in vain.” It cannot be that Jehovah shall speak in vain. The word of his power shakes the heavens and the earth, and makes the mountains leap from their beds of ages, and skip like rams, and the hills like lambs.

“He said, Let the wide heavens be spread,
And heaven was stretched abroad:
Abraham, I’ll be thy God, he said,
And he was Abraham’s God.”

Instead of sinners bringing God to their terms, in the matter of salvation according to the delusions of the arminians, God’s word shall prevail, its power and glory shall be felt, known and confessed by all who are the called according to his purpose and grace, and on his own head shall the crown of Immanuel flourish.

With what supreme delight may all the humbled saints contemplate the awful power and majesty of the word of God. We felt its omnipotence when we were by it called to repentance, when we were by it called to stand in judgment at his august bar! When clouds and darkness were round about him, and he kept back the face of his throne! And when sinking down to the deeps below under the sense of our guilt, we witnessed the omnipotence of the word which from his sacred lips said unto us “Live.” So shall the power of his word be witnessed when he shall bid the nations of the dead arise, and meet the destiny already spoken by his

mouth and made unavoidable by the power and immutability of his irrevocable word.

But now, how stands the case with us? Are we setting to our seal that God is true in all these declarations? Have our stiff knees been made to bend in reverential submission to our God? Have we sworn allegiance to the King of Saints? Or are we disputing and still blaspheming? Awful thought! are we trying to make God a liar, or charging him with perjury. We either believe what God has said and sworn, or we are infidels.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 450 – 456

REMARKS ON ISAIAH L. 10, 11; LI. 1, 2.

We have been called on to publish our views on the portions of Scripture referred to above, and in obedience to the desire of our friends we cheerfully present such views as we have upon the subject. It has been thought by some that the prophet in this text contrasts the child of God with the unregenerated idolater, but a careful investigation of the subject will, we think, convince the candid inquirer after truth that the whole subject is addressed to the real Israelites, who represent the real children of God. The subjects addressed were those who among the people of Israel, "Fear the Lord and obey the voice of his servant," especially such of them as "walk in darkness, and have no light." We do not understand by this description of the subjects of the address, that the servants of God, who fear him and obey the voice of his servant, never enjoyed the light of divine revelation, the light of life, or the light of the divine presence experimentally, but those simply, who for the time being are walking in darkness, from whom, for the trial of their faith, the Lord withholds the sensible radiance of his gracious presence. This is not infrequently the case with the people of God, as we may justly infer from the often repeated lamentations of the saints of both the new and old dispensations. This very prophet, Isaiah, was led to cry out, "Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior," and David said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." The disciples' eyes were holden sometimes, even when Jesus was personally with them, even in the flesh, that they should not for a time know him. There probably is not a saint on earth who would not utterly despair, if compelled to believe that God's children are never left in a state of darkness, wherein they walk having no light.

Those who profess to be always in the light, to have no dark seasons, no fiery trials or distressing doubts, are regarded justly as strangers in Israel. But the text contemplates those who walk in darkness, because they fear the Lord. Notwithstanding their darkness, they still walk, and that in obedience to the voice of his servant. To such only as walk in darkness, and have no light, is the blessed privilege given, to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon their God. The servant, or servants of the Lord, whose voice was to be obeyed by the God-fearing Israelites, were those holy men, by whom God spike to the fathers. They all spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Hence the communications of God by them demanded obedience, and that, too, whether they were in the light, or in a state of darkness. But, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." And his Son has appeared in the flesh, and taken on him the form of a servant. In his transfiguration, a voice came out of the cloud saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." He was spoken of by the prophet as God's servant who should deal prudently, who should be exalted and extolled, and be very high. He came down from heaven, to do the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. The apostles of the Lamb were also servants of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, and divinely commissioned to set in order authoritatively, all things pertaining to the doctrine, order and ordinances of the christian church. Under the gospel dispensation therefore, those who obey the voice of his servant, are those who obey our Lord Jesus Christ as their King and supreme Commander, and by his authority, his apostles, as those whom he has seated on thrones of judgment in his kingdom.

We may fairly infer that our darkness does not release us who fear the Lord, from our obligation to obey the

commandments of Christ, whether they be enjoined by him personally, or through his inspired apostles; in either case they are the voice of his servant, in the prophetic sense of our text.

Now then, Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? What shall be done in such a case, and under such circumstances? True, it is a trying state to be in, and to have to walk in the dark is certainly to walk by faith, and not by sight. The faith which is of the operation of God, always leads its subjects to trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God, for it destroys all confidence in the flesh. When all is total darkness around us, we cannot walk by sight, for we have none, we must therefore either stand still, or walk with a reliance on our guide. Christians who walk in darkness, can trust in nothing short of the name of the Lord, nor is there anything that can stay or support them, but their God. Why are they directed to trust in the name of the Lord? Because the saints have an interest in the name of the Lord, as the son has an interest in the name of his father, or as the wife has in the name of her husband. The legitimate son has a legal right to bear the name of his father, as an indemnity against want. The wife who has no other reliance or means of subsistence, feels perfectly composed, while her husband’s name is good at the bank, for all that she needs, for any sum that she may ask. By marriage union, she has a right in that name to the extent of all that is necessary for her support and comfort. Thus our beloved Lord has instructed his bride, that whatsoever she shall ask of the Father, in his name, he will do it. If she is in the dark, and needs light, or wisdom, she will call upon the Father of lights, in the name of her Husband, who is her Lord, and he will give liberally and not upbraid her.

The admonition in the next verse of our text, is to the same character, and shows the consequence of disregarding the instruction given her to trust only in the name of the Lord, by trying to supply her lack of light and comfort by her own inventions. It has been said in relation to natural things, that "Necessity is the mother of invention," and what has been more common with the saints when cold and comfortless, when dark and disconsolate, than the suggestion from the flesh that they must do something to improve their condition? When we are in total darkness, the question is, Can we not kindle a fire that will afford some light? And when cold, Can we not make a fire that will afford us comfort and warmth? Under these circumstances and impressions, the dear children of the living God have often been tempted by the devil, and inclined by their own ungodly natures to forget that they have renounced all confidence in the flesh, and trust alone in the name of their Lord, and stay alone upon their God. The flattering tempter tells them they are not machines, they must be up and doing, they must use means, they must gather sticks, although it be the antitypical Sabbath, and they must kindle fires, and compass themselves about with sparks, and warm in the heat of their fire, and walk in the light of the fire which they have kindled. Alas! how often have the children been thus beguiled. Get up a protracted meeting, call in some skillful manager who can get up a revival, collect some combustible matter, make a blaze, and then raise the shout, "Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire!" But is this trusting in the name of the Lord? Or is this staying upon our God? Is it not a lamentable evidence of distrust in God, when we resort to the inventions of human reason, for religious prosperity or comfort? This shall they have of the Lord's hand, they shall lie down in sorrow, for the Lord will chastise them for their follies. He will not consign them to the perdition of the ungodly, but he will cause them to lie down in sorrow, for their departure from the pathway of righteousness. But who ever heard of an unregenerated

sinner being sorry for having kindled religious fires? They glory in it. From pulpit and from press their vain gloryings are proclaimed abroad. We are ridiculed by those, as anti-efforts, inert do-nothings, &c., who will not worship their net, and burn incense to their drag.

As an encouragement to the faith of God's dear children who walk in darkness and have no light, still to trust in the name of the Lord, instead of looking to themselves or to their own works or inventions for light or comfort, they are in this connection called to hearken to the Lord, and look to the rock whence they are hewn, and the pit whence they are digged, to look unto Abraham their father, and unto Sarah that bare them. Abraham walked in total darkness, so far as human wisdom or light is concerned, for he went out not knowing whither he went. In regard to God's covenant with him, and his seed in him, he had simply to trust in God. Nature could afford no light or comfort in regard to what God had promised. Abram was stricken with years, and his body as good as dead, before the promised seed was born, yet he staggered not at the promise, for he believed God, and trusted in the name of the Lord. And when he was called to take his only son, even Isaac, and offer him upon an altar, he had to walk in darkness, without any light of nature to aid his vision. Yet he knew that God was able to raise up Isaac even from the ashes of the altar, and he trusted in his God. Look also unto Sarah, whose incredulity, laughed at the promise of a son, unless it could be brought to pass by the use of means, on the account of which she ultimately laid down in sorrow. But God was faithful to his promise, and at the appointed time the promised seed was born, according to the word of the Lord. "I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him," saith the Lord. Look then to this example of God's power and faithfulness, and be not faithless, but believing. Not only was Abraham alone when God called him, but God alone blessed and increased him. No aid was

required to assist him in the performance of the work, no contributions to replenish his treasury, no bond maids for instruments, nor human contrivances to facilitate the end. God was alone in calling, blessing and increasing Abraham. Look at him as a solitary unit called alone. Look at him as a multitude whose number excels the stars in the firmament, or the sands on the sea shore, and say, What hath God wrought? Then shall ye be prepared to rely upon his power and faithfulness to fulfill his word that he has spoken, and the oath that he hath sworn, that he will comfort Zion in all her waste places; that he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord, without any human aid or instrumentality whatever.

Our subject affords instruction and admonition, comfort and encouragement, to all the saints who hearken unto the Lord. The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of the holy Jerusalem, there shall therefore be no need of candles or artificial lights. He is a wall of fire round about his people, and a glory in their midst; therefore they are not to kindle fires of their own for light or comfort. However dark may be their way, it is their privilege to cast their care on him, and ‘trust in his name as a strong tower, in which all his family in heaven and in earth are named. They that trust in him shall be as Mount Zion that cannot be removed; but they that seek to wizzards that peep and mutter, shall regret their folly; for he will visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquities with stripes; nevertheless his loving kindness he will not utterly take away from him, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Once has he sworn by his holiness that he will not lie unto David.

Middletown, N. Y.
October 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 247 - 252

ISAIAH LXIII. 5.

"And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury, it upheld me." – Isaiah lxiii. 5.

WE have not time, space, nor ability to do justice to the subject embraced in time text; but, at the request of brother Singleton, we will submit a few general remarks.

We understand that Christ is set forth in this text and its connection, and the words of the text were used prophetically as his language, whether in relation to the work and sufferings he was appointed to perform, redeeming his people from sin, death, and hell, or of some special display of his power in the the destruction of Edom, or the man of sin, we will not attempt here to determine; but what we presume our brother wishes our views upon is: "I looked, and there was none to help," &c. If we should so construe this language as to represent that our Redeemer looked with the expectation of receiving hell), and that he was disappointed, we could not reconcile this passage with the general tenor of the scriptures. Had it been said of him after his conflicts and sufferings were finished, by the inspired writers, that he had looked for help, and wondered that there was none to uphold, such a construction as would imply disappointment, would appear more natural; but when we consider that this language was predictive, and used by the prophet seven hundred years before the advent of our Savior, it effectually guards the subject from any liability of its being so taken. The Son of God came not forth into our guilty world to do and suffer for and in behalf of his people without a full knowledge of all things which could have a bearing upon the objects of his divine mission. He had looked long before the

prophet wrote, and long before the world began, and clearly saw, and most certainly knew, that there were none to help him in the performance of his mediatorial work, and he wondered that there was none to uphold, &c. The best comment we can find on these expressive words may be read in the account given of his passion and death. Here we have an instance of his being left alone. Not only was he forsaken by his disciples, and by those ministering angels who had ministered to him in the garden, but the upholding presence of the Father was withdrawn. The wonder which he then and there experienced, was not that of disappointment; nor did it rise from inability to account for the sufferings he endured, but from the intensity of what he endured. On this grand wonder, angels in astonishment gazed; the sun, appalled, grew pale; earth was convulsed, and flinty rocks were burst asunder. Death stood aghast at the invasion of his gloomy domains; his prison, which for ages had inclosed the bodies of many of the saints, was now thrown open; the massive gates of the grave were unbarred, and the tenants thereof were raised. There was none to uphold. Single handed and alone he trod the wine press. He had power to lay down his life, and he had power to take it up again.

"Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me." Salvation – not only in his deliverance from the tomb, the resurrection of his body from the shades of death, but by his arm the salvation of all for whom he died, their final and eternal release from wrath and condemnation, his arm brought unto him. He effected all that he had contemplated; he had destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil, and delivered them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. "And my fury, it upheld me." The day of vengeance as in his heart, and the year of his redeemed had come. He was appointed to "proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day and vengeance of our God." That wrath which he endured, and

that fury in which he will crush. his foes, upholds his government, sustains him as a Savior, and as the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
April 1, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 631 - 633

ISAIAH LXVI. 7-9.

In offering a few remarks in reply to the queries of brother Hammond stated in his letter, we shall confine our remarks principally to the particular points on which he desired our views, viz:

1. What does Zion, as spoken of Isaiah lxvi. 7-9, mean?

2. If Zion is the church, who are her children?

Zion is a name which literally signifies, *a monument, raised up, &c*. It is the name of the loftiest mountain on which the city of Jerusalem was built, and on which the citadel of the Jebusites stood when David took possession of it and transferred his court from Hebron to it, by which it came to be called the city of David, and probably from his having deposited the ark there, it was called the holy hill. It is on the south side of the city of Jerusalem, rising about 400 feet from the valley of Hinnom.

This name is very frequently in the scriptures applied to the church of God, both in the Old and New Testaments. The suitableness and beauty of this appellation to the church of God, will appear from the following considerations:

1. The church is truly a monument of the goodness, mercy, love and grace of God.

2. The church has been raised from sin, condemnation, wrath, and death, by the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ; and being "risen with Christ, she is made to partake of those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." – Col. iii. 1.

3d. As the city of David, (David being an eminent type of Christ) Zion is well calculated to represent the city of our God, which he has set upon a hill, where her light cannot be hid.

4th. Zion was the seat of the government of national Israel, and as such, typical of the church of Christ, in which the spiritual throne of our anti-typical David is located.

5th. The strong and invincible walls and towers of Zion may illustrate the invulnerable walls of salvation with which God has inclosed his church.

6th. All that was prefigured by the ark, the mercy seat, the cherubim, &c., is found in the church. From these, among other considerations, the church as a city is very appropriately called Zion, or Sion, and in this sense we understand the appellation to be used in the text.

2. “If Zion is the church, who are her children?” There may be more difficulty involved in this interrogative than one would suppose. It would seem that the exposition given by Paul, Gal. iv. 27,28 and 31, ought to settle this point to the perfect satisfaction of all who are willing to abide by the decisions of the scriptures; and perhaps it is, but we know that many of the “wise and prudent” of the present age contend zealously that Ishmael and all the creatures of means produced by illicit affinity with the daughters of Moab, Ashdod, Ammon, &c., (see Ezra ix. 1, and Nehemiah xiii. 23-30,) are the legitimate offspring of the free woman. It would be very hard to satisfy arminians that God has ordained that the bond woman and all the children of means shall be cast out of Abraham’s house, and that none but such as are Christ’s are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to promise. It is true, Ishamel was spoken of as Abraham’s son by a bond maid; but God did not regard him as a son, when

said to Abraham, “Take now thy son, *thine only son* Isaac, whom thou lovest,” &c. – Gen. xxii. 2. Almost if not all the religious sects which claim to be the church of God, have supplied themselves with numerous handmaids in the form of societies, by which they expect to raise up children to Abraham, and they seem as confident that God will own them as the seed which he had promised to Abraham, as Sarah and Hagar were that Ishmael was the son which God had promised to Sarah; and as the even were that Matthias was the man whom God had chosen to complete the number of the apostles; but their disappointment will be equally great when the word of the Lord shall be executed and the bond-woman and her brood of illegitimates cast out.

Brother Hammond will understand that the names Church, Kingdom, City, Flock, Zion, &c., are used as nouns of multitude, and are applied to the church collectively; that none of these names are applied to the saints individually. And while the church as a whole body is regarded as the bride, the Lamb’s wife, all the individual members belonging to her are known in the relationship of children. Her Maker is her Husband; the Lord of Hosts is his name. He has promised to bring her sons from afar and her daughters from the ends of the earth, and to raise up the sons of Zion against the sons of Greece, and to make her as the sword of a mighty man. Hence we conclude that all the children of the promise, who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, are, as Isaac was, the children of promise; and Sarah, the free woman, which in Paul’s allegory is Jerusalem which his above, which is free, is the mother of them all; and as Zion was the highest elevation of Jerusalem, so it must denote Jerusalem which is above, instead of that Jerusalem which answered to Mount Sinai, and which is in bondage with her children.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
February 1, 1847

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 744 - 746

”IT IS FINISHED.“

WHEN the beloved Son of God hung on the accursed tree, when his soul was poured out unto death, when frighted rocks were burst asunder, the heavens in sackcloth were veiled, when the rugged bars of death were loosed, and tombs of marble resigned their sleeping tenants, when by the rending of the veil of the temple the ark, and cherubims, and mercy seat were all disclosed, while, nerved with malice, Jews and Bomans mocked, while racking pains and most tormenting smarts were inflicted on that blessed Lamb who bore our sins, when justice drew its flaming sword, and vengeance struck the dreadful blow, when hell exulting in her hour of darkness, amidst the awful grandeur of that dreadful scene, the voice of triumph, from the expiring Saviors lips shook the creation to its very centre; stern death, in dreadful terror clad, affrighted, paused and felt the thunder of that voice which in all the power and majesty of the eternal God-head shouted, "*It is finished.*"

With due humility and that reverence which becomes the ransomed of the Lord, let us inquire what was finished. From the sacred record of eternal truth we learn that all was finished that the glorious Mediator had began; love was not finished, for the love of God had no beginning. Election and predestination, with all the perfection's of Jehovah which shine forth in the economy of salvation were not finished, for these were without beginning, and can never, never end.

But something was certainly finished by the Savior when he in triumph gave the victorious shout; nor has our Lord left this important subject in the clark. "He who runs may read." "He finished transgression, made an end of sin," &c. He himself has declared that ho has finished the work that his Father gave him to do. We eagerly inquire, what then was

the work that his Father gave him to do? The Son of God responds, I come to do thy will, O God. I am come to do the will of my Father who sent me, and to finish the work. And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise them up at the last day. And the Father has given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. A shining messenger from the world of glory came down from heaven to earth, to announce the work that Jesus was to perform, viz: "His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." He finished the redemption of his people agreeably to the prediction of the Psalmist: "The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever."

First. He has finished the redemption of his people, and it ceaseth forever.
Second. He has finished, or made an end of sin, as far as it relates to those he represented.
Third. He finished the *law* as far as relates to its demands in reference to the election of grace, and the fulfillment of its divine requisitions. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or tittle of the law shall not pass until all is fulfilled. He is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believes.
Fourth. He has finished transgressions; for his blood cleanseth from all sin. He has given himself for his church, that he might redeem it from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.
Fifth. He has finished the curse, having borne our sins in his own body on the tree; and being made a curse for us, as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.
Sixth. He has finished the covenant of works, having blotted out the handwriting of ordinances which were against us, nailing them to the cross.

Seventh. He has finished the work of making sacrifices for Sin. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sin."
Eighth. He has given a finishing stroke to the perfection of his people, for by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified.
Ninth. He has finished death, having destroyed death and him that had the power of death, which is the devil.
Tenth. He finished the work of his sufferings, being now baptized with that baptism for which he was straitened until it was accomplished. When deep called unto deep, and the billows of divine wrath went over him; deep waters came into his soul.
Eleventh. He finished the complete pattern which he set for his children to walk in. Let no presumptuous wretch dare attempt to change the pattern of the things in heaven.

Finally, he has completely finished all that was written of him in the law, in the prophets, and in the psalms; and all that was necessary to secure the eternal salvation and justification of his people, and left them to challenge wicked men and devils, to declare, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; It is Christ that died. He was wounded for their transgression; he was bruised for their iniquities, and the chastisement of their peace was upon him; then with his stripes they are healed. He sees of the travail of his soul, and is satisfied.

Reflection. Is it finished? Or, is something remaining to be done by the redeemed, in order to secure the blessed objects of the death of Christ? If something remains to be done, whether it be *using means*, or giving our hearts to God, or our money to modern institutions, or sitting on anxious benches, or anything else, much or little, then is tile work not finished, and the words of the expiring Lamb of God are contradicted. But be assured, dying reader, whatever relative duties are enjoined on the disciples of Christ, there is among

them nothing to be added to the finished work of the Redeemer – nothing to render his redemption efficient, or effectual, or to extend its benefits to any for whom God did not eternally intend it; so far indeed from it, all the good works of the people of God are the immediate result of the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can be added to or taken from the work which Christ finished when he yielded up the ghost and bowed his head unto death. "It ceaseth forever."

Here then the Old School Baptists find a sure foundation to build upon, and hence we preach Christ crucified, and proclaim a finished salvation in his worthy name – a salvation completely suited to the case of the poor, the needy, the halt, the lame and the blind; a salvation suited to the condition of every hungry, starving soul, who by grace is made to feel his wretchedness, and mourn his sins; but by no means suited to the ease of the whole, who need no physician. The pharisees of eighteen hundred years ago, rejected this finished work, and from that day to the present it stands rejected, despised, opposed and slandered by all the work-mongers who have flourished in our sinful world. But tell us, reader, how do you view the perfect work and finished salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, for be assured if you despise this doctrine you are yet in your sins; but if you love the doctrine and can feed on it, you are not far from the kingdom.

Alexandria, D. C.,
February 10, 1837.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials of Gilbert Beebe
Volume 1 Pgs 350-353

I JOHN 2:1, 2

Brother Beebe: Will you please give your views on 1 John ii. 1,2? "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world."

Yours in love,
JOSEPH HUGHES.
Penningtonville, Pa., Nov. 21, 1859.

Reply: We have scarcely room to express all that might be said on the text proposed for consideration, and must necessarily be brief in our remarks, as we have considerable very interesting matter waiting for insertion in our crowded columns.

The simple, but affectionate appellation, "My little children," frequently occurs in the writing of this beloved apostle, and shows the paternal solicitude which he felt for the saints, to whom his instructions were addressed. "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not." The context shows what things he alluded to, not only what he had said of their spiritual, immortal, eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested, and of their consequent fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ, and their fellowship one with another, but the strife and opposition of their carnal, depraved natures, in opposition to the Spirit of life revealed or manifested in them; but also all that the whole epistle contains was designed not only that their joy might be full, but that they should not sin. A knowledge of their eternal vital union in and with their Lord Jesus Christ, was calculated to deter them from sinning, and to awaken every heavenly energy within them to holy aspirations, joy, and love, and

gratitude to God, for his abounding goodness and grace. The apostle could by no means indorse the foolish theory that a knowledge of the fixed and immutable principles of God's eternal counsel and decrees, would tend to licentiousness, but, as he fully implies, they should be written and read, preached and believed, for the very opposite effect, which they were sure to secure, that the saints, or little children, instructed in them should sin not. The mystery should be elucidated, that we all, while in this state of existence, have a depraved, sinful, unrenewed nature, so that if any man shall say he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him. But notwithstanding the indwelling pollution of their nature, which makes every saint groan while in this earthly tabernacle, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven, or in other words, that mortality might be swallowed up of life, there is in them who thus groan, an inward man that is born of God, and does not sin, "Because the seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." The old corrupt nature is born of the flesh; but the new man is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit. For this reason the saints are admonished to crucify the old man with its affections and lusts, and to put on the new man, which, after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

But, notwithstanding the opposition of the inner man to the sins and depravity of the flesh, the children of God are frequently harrassed and perplexed with a consciousness of their short-coming; to will is present with them, but how to perform that which is good they find not; and if it were not for the happy consideration that they have a divine Advocate with the Father, they would utterly despair. They are too thoroughly acquainted with themselves to allow them to have any confidence in the flesh. But -

“If any man sin, we have an Advocate,” &c. Whatever be the condition of others who sin, (and all men are sinners,) we, the saints, the little children, have an Advocate with the Father. Who is he? Jesus Christ. What is he? The Righteous. Then Jesus Christ the Righteous is the Advocate of his people, and this consideration is calculated to fill them with joy and gratitude. He has every requisite qualification to manage their cause with honor to God and safety to the saints. His name is an ample guarantee of this: Jesus signifies a Savior, and Christ, the Anointed and Holy one. As he is the Savior, he can be relied on, and as he is anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to open the prison to them that are bound, and to comfort all who mourn, &c.; no other one could fill the office of our Advocate so well. Possessing in himself embodied all the fullness of the Godhead, with all heaven and earth at his command, and all principalities and powers, thrones and dominions, things visible and invisible, under his control, with all the power in heaven and earth in his hand, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in him, how can he fail to maintain the cause of those for whom he officiates? He is the Righteous. He is never wrong. “He is of God, made unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.” And not only is he the Righteous, but he is “the Lord our Righteousness.” By virtue of a deathless union with all the members of his mystical body, he is their righteousness, and so in the presentation of himself before his Father, he presents his saints perfect and without blame before him in love. Eternal Justice is satisfied with him as the justifying righteousness of his body, the church; the law can ask no more; and the Father is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; but the apostle adds -

“And he is the propitiation for our sins.” The word propitiation signifies reconciliation, or atonement, satisfaction &c. He, our Advocate with the Father, by his righteousness, is the

reconciliation or atonement for our sins. He gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquities, and purify to himself a peculiar people, &c. Instead then of sinners being redeemed with corruptible things, as silver or gold, nothing short of the precious blood of Christ could propitiate, conciliate, or satisfy the demands of law and justice for our sin. And instead of the pardon of the Pope, or Priest, the absolution of the Bishop, the prayers of ancient or modern revivalists, or the works of our own hands, commending us to the favor of God, he, and be alone, is the propitiation for our sins, and that on the most sacredly righteous principles, as he is *the* righteous. No sacrifice that we could make, or offering the world could afford, could atone for our sins. The cattle of a thousand hills, ten thousand rivers of oil, or the fruit of our body, or the labors of our hands - all, all would be offered in vain. "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not; neither hadst thou pleasure in them. Then said I, [Jesus,] Lo, I come, in the volume of the Book it is written of me." And it is written in that volume of none other, consequently there is salvation in none other. Ages of penitence, rivers of tears, millions of wealth bestowed for benevolent purposes, with all the reformations, prayers, or voluntary humility that mortals could perform, could make no propitiation for our sins, any more than they could make another "Jesus Christ the Righteous." For Jesus Christ the Righteous is not a but *the* propitiation for our sins. And for any man to attempt to make or offer, or to rely on anything else for atonement, or reconciliation, is to set up another Christ, which is idolatry.

"He is the propitiation." This declaration is clear, positive and emphatic; it admits of no uncertainty; it rests on no contingent agency or condition. It is not something which may be, or is to be; he already is the propitiation for our sins; and this propitiation is complete, as Jesus is complete; it is righteous, as Jesus is righteous; and it is the only propitiation, as he is the only Jesus Christ.

"And not for our sins only." That is, as we understand the inspired apostle, not only for the sins of those little children, or saints to whom he addresses his epistle, which were scattered abroad, and then in the flesh; but *also,* or in like manner, *for the* sins of *the whole world.* The enemy has attempted to pervert the terms, *the whole world,* by an unrestricted application of them to the whole material world. But while they thus cavil, they would scarcely allow that it should include the sins of horses, swine, snakes and vipers; but they would rather contend that it means only the human family. They themselves, then, while they condemn the restriction of the application of the words, do themselves what they condemn. But let it be remembered that the apostle John uses the same words in reference to another class who, instead of being reconciled to God by this propitiation, are still in their sins: "We know that we are of God, and the *whole world* lieth in wickedness." Here it is very obvious that John contrasts the condition of those who are of God, with that of the whole world, which lieth in wickedness. (John v. 19.)

These words are to be understood according to the manner in which they are used. When used in an unrestricted sense they mean the heavens and earth, and all that they contain. When used in reference to the saints, they mean all the saints, from the beginning of the world to the end of time; and in this instance it applies more expressly to the saints among the Gentiles as well as those among the Jews. And when used in regard to those who lie in wickedness, it means all sinners, in all ages, and in all the nations and kindreds of the earth.

The plain and obvious sense, then, of the words, as they are used in the text, is that Christ is the only Propitiation in the whole world. That God's elect among the Gentiles are saved in the same way and manner, as are the saved of the Jews.

Go where you may, no other Savior of sinners can be found; with no other sacrifice will God be pleased; with no other atonement could the law, or eternal justice of Jehovah, be satisfied. All, therefore, who are redeemed from among men, in every kindred or nation, are reconciled to God by him who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see, to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. (1 Tim. vi. 16.)

Notwithstanding all the caviling of Arminians, and general atonement advocates, on the text under consideration, there is not another text in the Bible the plain and palpable meaning of which they have more reason to dread than this. It sweeps away, as with a besom of destruction, every refuge of lies on which they would predicate their cherished theories of salvation by works, by the use of means, by the labor of good or of bad men. Let the plain import of the text be admitted, and Jesus Christ the righteous will stand alone confessed as the only Savior, the only propitiation, the only propitiatory sacrifice for sin, that the eternal counsel of God has ordained, that the law can recognize, or eternal justice admit.

The contemplation of our subject is full of consolation for the tried, tempted, troubled and persecuted saints of the Most High God. The inspired words of truth regards them, as they really are and should be, a brotherhood of little children. They do not feel like giants, able to save themselves, and aid considerably in saving others. They feel the necessity of being led by the Spirit, step by step, and instead of eating or earning their own bread, or of wearing their own apparel, they desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. As the confiding babe relies upon the strength of its faithful nurse, so do they rely alone on the everlasting arm of

their blessed Savior, which is underneath them. They rejoice in their adorable Advocate with the Father. In heaven's high courts they have a reliable Advocate. As Jeremiah said, "Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is his name: he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon." - Jer. i. 34. Our Advocate knows our feeble frame, he knows the feeling of our infirmities, and well he knows how to succor them that are tempted. Nor is he less familiar with his Father's counsel. The law of God is in his heart, and all that he asks of the Father is granted, for the Father always hears him, and is always well pleased in him. He never lost a case, nor will he ever lose a case. While the presumptuous, who love sin, and find in it a congenial element, are sent empty away, the poor, the broken-hearted, who lament their vileness, and who, above all things, desire to be holy, as their Father in heaven is holy, may rest assured that

"Their cause can never, never fail,
For Jesus pleads, and must prevail."

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 272 - 278

I JOHN 2:1,2

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not; and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Although this text has often been discussed in our columns, at the special request of a beloved brother we will venture a few remarks upon it, hoping that it may be of service to at least some of our readers who desire to know the truth. The affectionate manner of the aged apostle, in addressing the scattered saints, as his little children, is worthy of our observation, and of imitation by those who are called to feed the flock of God; not as lords over God's heritage, but with the affectionate solicitude of a tender father in Israel, who has no greater joy than to see the children of Zion walking in the truth. The aged brethren in the church are, by divine authority, to be entreated as fathers, and the younger as brethren; and in return the aged servants of Christ are to instruct, admonish and reprove the saints with the faithful regards of a father. John not only calls them children, but he claims them as his little children. They have not yet attained their maturity, for he says, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." But at present we are very small, and need to be nursed, fed, and instructed in the things of the kingdom. Having thus addressed them, he tells them why he writes to them. "These things write I unto you that ye sin not." The writing was not to make them children, or to tell them how to become children, but because they were children - as he says in his next chapter, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." The relationship is already as perfect as it ever can be or ever need to be. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of

God!" And being the sons of God it does not become us to sin - or transgress the law by which the children of God are governed; not that sin can dissolve this relationship; but because it is dishonoring to our heavenly birth, and calculated to pierce our own souls with many sorrows. The law of our King being written in the hearts of his subjects, they cannot sin without sorrow; they love holiness, and sin is loathsome and distressing to them, hence for their peace and God's declarative glory the apostle desires that they should not sin.

But the things which John has written to prevent them from sinning are very different from the things which are urged by many of the modern divines professedly for the same purpose. Carnal professors are only deterred from what they call sin by threats, terrors, and the fear of wrath and damnation; but these appliances are all omitted by John. He does not excite their fleshly passions with terror; but appeals to that immortal principle of love to God, and love to holiness which God has written in their hearts. And the things which, in the wisdom of God, have a tendency to prevent their sinning, are the very things which legalists and all workmongrel professors hold to be calculated to make them sin the more. ***These things***written by John; read them all. What are they? Now are ye the sons of God; Christ is now your life. We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him. This life in which the saints are made manifest as the sons of God was with the Father, and was manifested: and this is the record, borne by the Three that bear record in heaven, and the Three that bear witness in earth. That God hath (not that he proposed to) given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. It is frequently urged in this day that to assure the saints that their life is hid with Christ in God will make them careless and indifferent about their deportment, and lead them into licentiousness. But John knew better, for he was inspired by the Holy Ghost to write these very things

to them, for the very opposite purpose that they should not sin. The terrors of hell may work upon the selfish elements of carnal nature, and make them cringe and tremble; but it is the love of God that leadeth the children of God to repentance. Hence the things written by John of the perfect security of all the saints in Christ, and of his Advocacy with the Eternal Father in their behalf, and of his propitiatory atonement for them, presents such incentives to holiness as only the children of God can appreciate, or have any knowledge of. If you would deter the legalist or the hypocrite from transgression, threaten him with retribution in wrath, terrify him with the flames of hell. But the christian is moved by the love of God and of holiness which God has implanted in his heart Tell the ungodly that he has an Advocate with the Father, who is sure to gain his cause and secure for him the approbation of Jehovah if he sins, and he will indulge his lusts, and take his fill of sin; because sin is his element, he has not lost his relish for it; and all he desires is that he may escape punishment; for the children who bear the image of Christ and have his spirit in them, are all the more disgusted with sin, as they are enabled to see and contemplate the holiness of God. ***And if any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous***. Although the little children of God have this immortal principle in them, they cannot sin because their seed abideth in them, and they cannot sin because they are born of God, and are led by his spirit, yet they painfully feel the workings within them of an opposite nature, which is born of the flesh, and in which there dwells no good thing, which wars against the law of their mind, and brings them into captivity to the law of sin, which is in their members. This would utterly discourage them, if they did not know they had an able, faithful and infallible Advocate with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous, in whose righteousness they participate, and are thereby justified before God. They groan, being burdened with their earthly nature, and long to be delivered from the

body of this death; but their faith still clings to Jesus Christ the righteous as the only foundation of their hope for eternal life, which God that cannot lie promised before the world began. As their banner is the banner of love, and as love is the motive power that works in them to glorify God, the more fully assured they are that God has effectually secured their eternal salvation in Jesus Christ the righteous, beyond the possibility of a failure, the more exceedingly careful and prayerful they are to avoid sinning against that God whom they so dearly love.

As their Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous, perfectly understands their case. By his knowledge shall he justify many. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal. The Lord knoweth them that are his." He is always right. Not only righteous in all his perfections, as God, as man, and as Mediator between God and men, and the saints are made the righteousness of God in him, and he is of God made unto them Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption, and he is the Lord our Righteousness; but officially, he is also righteous - never wrong. He advocates no cause in which he can fail of complete success. He never mistakes his clients, nor does he ever attempt for any upon uncertainty. Nor does he plead upon any indefinite or uncertain grounds. His plea for his children before the Father is not what they have done to entitle them to divine favor, for no such plea could stand, or gain the suit for them. But he pleads what God and grace has done. In his advocacy for us, he takes the sealed book, searches the eternal records of the counsel and will of God - shows every demand of law and justice met and canceled by himself, and presents himself the approved propitiation for their sins. ***And he is the propitiation for our sins***. A propitiation, according to our standard lexicons, is that which renders propitious, or that which removes wrath and condemnation; an atonement for sin. In this sense Jesus

Christ the righteous, standing in relation to his people as the Head of the body, the church, he having put away the sins of the church, and being the righteousness of God unto them - presents them holy and unblameable in himself. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law should be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. As our righteousness, and our atoning sacrifice, he has borne our griefs, carried our sorrows, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifies. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.. That is, as our Advocate with the Father. He was delivered for our offenses, and raised from the dead for our justification. Hence the atonement, or at-one-ment is made, the propitiation is perfect, and the little children are safe.

And not for ours only, but the sins of the whole world. This atonement was not only for those primitive saints which were called by grace, in the cities of Judah in the days of the apostles, but, this being the only propitiation in all the world, his propitiation removes all condemnation from the people of God in any part of the world, at any period. This mission of Jesus was to save his people from their sins, and God has informed us that the Lord's portion is his people, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. And "This people," he says, "I have formed for myself. They shall show forth my praise." They are redeemed out of every nation, kindred, and tongue under heaven - therefore the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ our

Advocate was not for the saints immediately written to by John alone, but covered the sins of all his people from the beginning of time to the end of the world; in every nation under heaven. So that there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. No man cometh to the Father but by him.

The play on words by arminians, universalists and others who would pervert the Scriptures of truth only shows their readiness to sport with their own deceivings. Should they give the words, ***the whole world*** an unlimited application, it would include swine and horses, serpents and vipers, as well as men and women, and if the words be restricted in their application, the only sure rule of restriction must be to the redeemed family of God - out of the whole world. The words, ***the whole world***, are used by this same apostle in this restricted sense, in this same epistle both in reference to the saints and the ungodly. In reference to the saints, as in our text, meaning all the redeemed of the Lord throughout the world; and in Chapter 5:19, in reverence exclusively to the ungodly. "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." This was the common way of speaking and writing in the New Testament. For instance, Jerusalem and Judea, and all the regions round about Jordan, were baptized by John in Jordan. But the Pharisees, who dwelt in Jerusalem and Judea and in the regions round about Jordan were not baptized by John in Jordan - only those were meant who brought forth fruit meet for repentance. The proclamation of the advent of Christ was glad tidings of great joy to ***all men***; but Herod, when he heard the tidings, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Caesar made a decree that all the world should be taxed; but he levied no tax on the continent of America. The Jewish council said: "If we let these men go, the whole world will go after them; and the Romans will come and take away our place and nation." We might multiply examples in the Scriptures where such words

are used in a restricted sense, and if they were not so used by John in our text, then there must have been two distinct ***whole worlds***: the one redeemed to God - saved and called out of the world, having Christ as their Advocate and propitiation, and the other whole world lying in wickedness without a propitiation or an Advocate with the Father. But as we have neither time nor inclination to enter the list with cavilers and infidels, we leave them to draw their own conclusions, until God may open their blind eyes if it be his pleasure to do so; for we have no power to deliver them from the power of darkness, or to translate them into the kingdom.

We hope that the inquiring saints may be edified, and our object will be secured.

Middletown, N.Y.
July 1, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials of Gilbert Beebe
Volume 5 pgs 13-19

I JOHN IV. 14.

BRETHREN G. BEEBE & SON: – If you feel so inclined, and have time, please give your views on 1 John iv. 14. I have read your paper about a year, and am so well pleased with it that I want it continued another year.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
E. S. LEGGETT.
Little Red, Ark., March 6, 1880

REPLY: – The text on which our brother desires us to write reads thus, "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world."

1st. By the pronoun *we*, the beloved disciple and inspired apostle John includes with himself those who are by a spiritual experience made competent witnesses of the truth as it is in Jesus; not only his companions in apostleship, but all who bear the peculiar characteristic marks which he has so faithfully given, by which the children of God and heirs of immortal glory are identified in this epistle and through the scriptures.

2d. Of those, who being taught of God, born of the spirit, of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever, and thereby made competent witnesses, it is said, "And we have seen." None others have seen the kingdom of God, of which *we* testify; for "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Things "which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit."

"Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things." – 1 Cor. ii. 8-10, 13-15.

Those who are truly born of the spirit of God are called the children of light; for in him, of whose spirit they are born, it is written, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men." – John i. 4. "And he [Jesus] turned him into his disciples, and said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see." – Luke x. 23; Matt. xiii. 16. In the twelfth verse of the chapter in which our text is found, and in the immediate connection with it, John says, "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us his spirit." It is no element of our earthly nature that hath ever seen God at any time. This is a positive declaration, and admits of no exceptions. Even when God shines in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ, it is not seen or perceptible to our carnal or fleshly mind, which is born of and educated by the flesh; but it is a revelation of the Spirit to that faith which, John says, is born of God. Flesh and blood cannot reveal it, neither can flesh and blood comprehend it. God shines in our hearts, but the darkness of our fleshly nature comprehendeth it not. To our mental powers, which are born of the flesh, it is like the wind, which we may hear and feel, but we see it not, neither can we tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. If it were a manifestation to the fleshly elements of our earthly nature, illuminating our natural mind, then the most wise and learned and prudent of our race would have the clearest understanding of it, and the undeveloped mental capacity of

babes would be much less capacitated for comprehending it. But is it so? Jesus rejoiced in spirit when he said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." – Matt. xi. 25,26. If the wise men of this world could by searching find out God, or by their intellectual sagacity, or by study, come to a knowledge of God, they would be able to save themselves; for "this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." – John xvii. 3. Even the eyes of those whose understanding God has opened, and of whom our apostle says, in our text, *have seen*, invariably find their human reasoning faculties incompetent to see or to search out the things of the spirit of God. The science and philosophy accessible to the natural capacity of the human mind, is called the wisdom of this world, and is adapted to the elements of this world, but it can extend no further. It has pleased God in his infinite wisdom, that man by the wisdom of this world shall not know him. This is just as true of christians as it is of infidels. Although the christian is taught of God, yet the teaching of the Spirit is spiritual, and can only be spiritually discerned. Our earthly nature has no spiritual discernment, and the divine instruction we receive is given to our faith, which, being born of God, is a fruit of the Spirit, and therefore has spiritual discernment; for it is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen or comprehended by the natural mind of man. Christians have a natural mind, which is called a carnal (fleshly) mind, and it is enmity against God: not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. From this carnal mind in the fleshly nature of the christian arise all the reasonings, doubtings, fearing, murmurings, and lustings which oppose our spiritual mind. Our earthly nature, which is called the *old man*, retains all the elements of a depraved nature; and although by the new birth of the Spirit the new man, which

after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, is born and developed as the production of the incorruptible seed, which cannot sin, because it is born of God, still the enmity of the flesh, which is born of the flesh, remains with us as long as we continue in the flesh, and its opposition to God and the things of the Spirit is never so fully felt and realized before as subsequently to the new birth. The Shulamite, in whom we see as it were the company of two armies, is a stranger to us until we see and feel it in the conflict raging within us between the flesh and the spirit. The fleshly nature, which is called the old man, has never seen God at any time, and is the fool that saith in his heart, "There is no God." Self is its idol; it neither sees, knows nor loves the true God. But the spiritual or new man, born of the Spirit, has a saving knowledge of God, has seen the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ; and having seen the Son, has seen the Father also, and is taught of God to know that the Son is in the Father, and the Father is in the Son, and that the Son and the Father are one and the same God. The world by wisdom knows not God, neither does the worldly wisdom of the christian's carnal mind know him; yet he is revealed by the Holy Spirit to the faith and spiritual understanding of all who are born of God. If we had not to encounter the questionings, reasonings and caviling of our sinful nature, we would suppose a mere reference to the daily experience of every christian would be a thoroughly convincing demonstration that in every christian dwells both the *men* of whom the apostle speaks in this chapter (1 John iv. 12, 14): the old man, our earthly, fleshly nature, which never saw God at any time; and also the new man, which has seen the Son, and consequently has seen the Father also, and would be fully convinced that in the mystery of godliness Christ and the Father are one.

As competent witnesses, "We have seen and do testify." By the mouth or pen of the prophet, God ahs said to Jacob

whom he has created, and to Israel whom he has formed, "I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when there was no strange god among you: therefore ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God." – Isa. xliii. 12. A competent, true and faithful witness is one who speaks that which he knows, and testifies that which he has seen. – John iii. 11. John testifies of those with whom he identifies himself as divinely qualified witnesses, "that which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) that which we have seen and heard declared we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." – 1 John i. 1-4.

The witnesses to testify in this most vitally important cause must be divinely and experimentally qualified, and in a manner that no human institution or theological drilling can supply. To testify that of which we have no knowledge is to testify falsely. As the Lord said of the carnal Israelites, "And though they say, The Lord liveth; surely they sware falsely." – Jer. v. 2. Not because the thing itself was untrue, but because they did not know whereof they affirmed. They had not the requisite knowledge of the fact, and could not in truth testify to that which they knew not. So this apostle testifies that many false prophets are gone out into the world, and admonishes the saints to try the spirits, whether they be of God, and gives an infallible rule by which to try all who profess to be prophets of the Lord. He says, "Hereby know we the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of

God." "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error." As an indispensable evidence that they are the true and approved ministers of Chris, they must not merely admit the incarnation of Christ, but, if we rightly understand the apostle, they must give evidence that he has come, by his spirit, into their flesh; as he further says, "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his spirit." We should observe that it is the spirits that are to be tried, not merely the words uttered by the prophets that are gone out into the world. John does not say, Every man or every prophet that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God, but *every spirit* that maketh this confession is a spirit which is of God; for "No man can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Many false prophets may say that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, while the spirit by which they are led denies him; hence the rule given by which they are to be detected is to try their spirits rather than their words. Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. – 2 Cor. xi. 14,15. By trying the spirits we are to distinguish between the *spirit of truth*, whom the world cannot receive, (John xiv. 17,) and the spirit of error, which the world can receive. For the many false prophets who have gone out into the world are of the world; they speak of the world, and the world hearth them.

"If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." And if we are led by the spirit of God, that will prove that we are born of God, and are his sons. And it is not enough for one to say that Christ dwells by his spirit in his flesh or in his heart, while he is breathing slaughter against any of God's

children; for "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God; neither he that loveth not his brother." "He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life [or Christ, who is eternal life] abiding him." "And this is the commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us." If Christ by his spirit dwells in us, his indwelling will be manifested by that gentle, long-suffering, patient and forbearing spirit which he manifested in the days of his flesh. "Not as Cain, who was [in the spirit by which he was led] of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous." We "who have seen and do testify," do not bear our testimony in words which are falsified by our works, our walk and bearing one towards another; but we testify by an exhibition of the fruits of his spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance; and not by the works and passions of our depraved nature, which are adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcrafs, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envying, murders, drunkenness, reveling, and such like. – Gal. v. 19-23. But rather "laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, as new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of ht word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." – 1 Peter ii. 1-3. If we testify that Christ has truly come in our flesh, and is formed in us the hope of glory, that he controls our affections, suppresses our carnal passions, that he reigns in and rules over us, causing us to love one another with a pure heart fervently, even as God for Christ's

sake has loved us, then shall all men know that we are Christ's disciples. "Herein is love; not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."

Having briefly considered the credentials, or some of the marks by which the ministers of Christ are to be distinguished from the false prophets which are gone out into the world, we will now pass on and consider the testimony which they are to bear, namely, "that the Father *sent* the Son to be the Savior of the world." This testimony, involving the sacred relationship of the Father and the Son, and of the subordinations of the Son, who in eternal Deity or Godhead is one with the Father, in his Mediatorial relations to the Father and to the church, is commissioned and *sent* by the Father into the world to do with will of the Father, and to finish the work which the Father gave him to do, presents a mystery of godliness too deep for finite minds to comprehend or explain. The vain attempts to solve this most profound and sacred of all mysteries has produced a greater amount of contention, bitter strife, cruel persecution, and even bloodshed in the religious world, perhaps, than any other cause. Ecclesiastic prelates and papal councils have sought to enforce their dogmas or decisions by such appalling arguments as prisons, confiscations, tortures, fires and sword, and Protestants have in turn displayed much of the same implacable cruelty in trying to enforce their peremptory decisions; and even some whom we regard as brethren beloved for the truth's sake have manifested but little forbearance towards those who cannot adopt the peculiar terms in which they express their views on the subject. But we conclude that those who testify only what they have seen, as revealed to them by the spirit

of truth, whom the world *cannot* receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, and who are willing to rely implicitly on the record which God has given, will be satisfied to adopt such forms of expression on this sublime and glorious subject as are used in the scriptures. If what has been given us by inspiration of the Holy Ghost has been misunderstood, and to some extent misinterpreted, by honest inquirers after the truth, it is not strange that uninspired brethren should fail to make themselves clearly understood by their brethren. Jesus our Lord has testified, saying, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." – Matt. xi. 27. The depth of this unsearchable and incomprehensible mystery, without controversy is too profound for our finite comprehension; it is higher than the heavens, deeper than any depth that we can fathom, and as broad and boundless as eternity. Amazing thought: God was manifest in the flesh! He who was manifested in the flesh hath a name written that no man knew but he himself, and his name is called, The Word of God. In his wonderful record as bearing this name we are informed, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." – John i. 1. How he could be the one only living and true God, and yet be with God, is a divine mystery too profound for our limited understanding to comprehend. But we know it is so, because this is the record God has given of his Son. We cannot say there were two Gods, for, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." – Deut. vi. 4,5. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me." "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." – Isa. xlv. 5, 22. To our understanding, the scriptures testify to us but one true and living God, and positively deny the existence of any other

beside him. In equally positive terms we are assured by the same divine record that the Word which was with God in the beginning was God, and to him as the only wise God, who is before all things, and by whom are all things, the creation of all things is ascribed. “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.” – John i. 3. To which testimony the apostle adds the following corroborating testimony: “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” – Col. i. 16,17. This to our mind settles beyond all controversy the all-important truth, that all the supreme glory, power, might and majesty of eternal Deity belong to Christ, and in their refulgent brightness and eternal fullness belong to him, as it is declared in the very first sentence of the bible, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;” and that God who created all things, the inspired apostle testifies was and is the same Word, “In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature.” “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell.” – Col. i. 14, 15, 18, 19. Now this being the testimony of the scriptures, whether we can comprehend it or not, it must be and is the eternal truth of God; and to deny that Christ is the true God and eternal life, that he is the only wise God our Savior, is to deny that he is a Savior at all, for he was said, as we have before repeated, “I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior.”

But our Savior Jesus Christ is not only the true, supreme, self-existent, independent and eternal God, who created all

things, but he is "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." – 1 Tim. iii. 16. "The Word" which was with God, and which was God, "was made flesh, and dwelt among us." – John i. 14. In his advent to the world his name was called "Emanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." – Matt. i. 23. In the habiliments of flesh and blood, John testifies, saying, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." "And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace." – John i. 14, 16. We do not understand that his Godhead was changed from Deity to humanity, but he was manifested in the flesh. "He took on him the seed of Abraham;" and, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." – Heb. ii. 14. "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." – Phil. ii. 6-8.

When our adorable Redeemer speaks of his entire subordination to the Father, we understand him to be speaking of Mediatorial Sonship, of which he says that he "came into the world not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." – John vi. 38. "And I am not come of myself; but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him; for I am come from him, and he sent me." – John vii. 28, 29. "Then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that hath sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone: for I do always those things that please him." – John viii. 28, 29. "Jesus said unto them

[the carnal Jews], If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and cam deform God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." – John viii. 42. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I may take it again. No man taketh it from me: but I lay it down of myself; I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not." – John x. 17, 18, 36, 37.

These quotations from the writings of John we think fully justify his declaration in our text, that "The Father sent the Son," and that the Son came in obedience to the will of the Father, and that as the Son of God he could of himself do nothing; that it was the indwelling Godhead of Christ that made him in his Sonship the efficient Savior of his people. That is, as we understand, if he were not God, as well as the Son of God, or if he and the Father were not one in eternal identity as God, he could not do the will of the Father, and finish the Mediatorial work that was given him to do.

We have understood that in the numerous scriptures wherein our Lord Jesus Christ is called God (Heb. i. 8), the true God (1 John v. 20), the eternal God (Deut. xxxiii. 27), the only wise God (1 Tim. i. 17, Rom. xvi. 27), the might God (Isa. ix. 6), he is spoken of in his identity with the Father; not as a begotten Son, but in his self-existent supreme Deity, as one and identical with the Father, as he himself declares, "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30); while all the titles he bears, as the child born, the Son given, the Wonderful, Counsellor, Prince of peace, Son of God, Son of man, Prophet, Priest, Mediator, Redeemer, Shepherd and Bishop, Apostle and High Priest, Head over all to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all, are relative titles,

expressive of what belongs to his Sonship. In his sonship he is the only begotten Son; begotten of and subordinate to his Father. In this begotten Sonship he is the Word that was with God, and in his eternal Deity he is the Word that is God. The same was in the beginning with God. In all the glory of the eternal Father he was glorified before the world was; and with the glory of God's own self, which he had with the Father before the world was, is he now exalted far above all heavens. – John xvii. 5. As the Son of God and the Mediatorial Head of the church, "his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." – Micah v. 2. And as the Son of God, "We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." The purpose of the Father in sending his Son into the world is very definitely declared in our text. It was to be the Savior of the world, and he is truly the only Savior that has ever come into the world. No other name under heaven has been given whereby we must be saved. Beside our Emanuel there is no Savior; but "This is a faithful saying, and worth of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." – 1 Tim. i. 15. Therefore our apostle says, for the consolation of the saved, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation [atoning sacrifice] for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 1, 2. This declaration is true, from the fact that he is a Savior, and the only Savior in all the world; but it does not justify the conclusion that he came commissioned from the Father to save all the world, in the unrestricted application of the term. The word *world*, in its full signification, includes the natural heavens and earth, with all things which in them are. He did not come to save the natural world, for it is to be burned, with all the works of men, and not saved beyond the time appointed. None profess to believe that our Lord came to save the inanimate things of nature, nor even all the animate creatures in the world; he came not to save the beasts of the

field, fowls of the air, nor fishes of the sea. But we are informed by an angel from the throne of God that "He shall save his people from their sins." – Matthew i. 21. Arminian scoffers amuse their simple hearers by telling them that we make a-l-l spell part; but are they willing to admit that Christ is absolutely the Savior or any portion of the world? We understand them to hold that Christ came to make it possible for everybody in the world to save themselves by performing certain conditions, accepting certain overtures, or by using certain conditions, thus making a-l-l to mean none at all. John, in speaking of the saved of the Lord, speaks of them as all the children of God in the world, whether Jews or Gentiles, and, like Peter, applies the promise of salvation to all that afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call; and in distinguishing them from the rest of mankind, says, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." – 1 John v. 19. Thus applying the words *world*, and *whole world*, to all the saved people of God in all the world, and also to all the unbelievers in the world who are not saved, who still lie in wickedness, and for whom Christ does not pray. – John xvii. 9. But it is hardly worth our while to argue or contend with cavilers; for should we convince their judgment, it would not satisfy them unless they are quickened by the Spirit and taught of God. If we could fill their mouths with gall, we could not make them love it. The gospel of God our Savior will ever be unto the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called of God and taught by his spirit, it is Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. – 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

We have seen and do testify that Christ is the Savior; and if he is a Savior he saves. An effort to save, if unsuccessful, is not sufficient. One who tries and fails, is not entitled to the distinguishing appellation. There are thousands of infatuated mortals on earth who profess to be laboring for the salvation

of sinners, who, if they could succeed, would be saviors. But they are all certain to fail, for "Salvation is of the Lord." Neither is there salvation in any other, for God has himself said, "I, even I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Savior." – Isa. xliii. 11.

As Jesus Christ is the Savior, and as besides God there is no Savior, the testimony to us is clear, that Jesus Christ is God as well as man, and the only Mediator between God and men; and as the head of the church is Christ, so the head of Christ is God. As the church, the body of Christ, could not subsist without Christ her head; so Christ, if he were not God, one with the Father, dwelling in the Father, and the Father dwelling in him, could not be the Savior of the world, for he says, "Verily, verily I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." Again, "I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just: because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." – John v. 19, 30.

In our remarks on this awfully sublime and vitally important subject, we have not consulted the decisions of Prelates of the papal hierarchy, the enforcement of which has drenched the earth with blood; but we have sought instruction from God by search the divine record, deeply conscious of our infirmity and liability to err; but with no desire to impose our views on others, any further than they shall be found sustained by that testimony that shall stand and reflect eternal honor to our God, and to his Christ, when all the speculations and doctrines of men shall pass to their final doom. If in this, or in any other article we have ever written, we have uttered a word derogatory to the Deity, humanity, or Mediatorial character or titles of our blessed Savior, we have failed to write what we most sincerely believe; and may God

forgive, and our readers one and all attribute our failure to truthfully present the subject in perfect harmony with the divine testimony of the holy scriptures to our lack of ability. But we dare not flatter ourself that, with our very limited ability, we shall ever be able to do justice to so grand and glorious a subject, or escape the criticism and animadversions of those who watch for our halting.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 9
May 1, 1880

JAMES 5:13

“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.”

The spiritual tribes of the Lord, to whom this epistle was written, have the assurance that in the world they shall have tribulation, and be subject to afflictions, for God’s people have always been characterized as a poor and an afflicted people, who trust in the Lord. Yet there are seasons when they are enabled to mount up with wings as eagles, and to rise above their pressing sorrows, when they are permitted to drink of the streams of that river which makes glad the city of our God - when they drink, and, for a season at least, do forget their poverty and remember their misery no more. The tide of their sufferings and of their rejoicings ebbs or flows as they endure the absence of sensible manifestations of the divine presence of their Lord, or are permitted to sit under his shadow with great delight, as his smiles create their purest joys, and when his smiles are withdrawn nothing can supply to them the lack. That this is, and always has been the case with the children of God in all ages past, the Scriptures fully testify; and that the same must be our lot while here below we have no reason to doubt; nor have we any just cause to desire that it should be otherwise, for although no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards it works the peaceable fruits of righteousness in them who are exercised thereby. And we are assured by divine revelation that our light afflictions, which are for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the things that are seen, but on the things that are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. We are, therefore, gainers ultimately, and even at the present they afford us reliable evidence that God dealeth with us as with children. But still, such is our

weakness, we soon would faint under the weight and pressure of our afflictions if we were not sustained by the strong hand of our covenant God. Our impatient nature is prone to seek for sympathy in our afflictions from those around us who are subject to like passions, and it is soothing to our feelings to know that we have kind friends who can feel for our woes, and offer words of consolation and comfort; but still we are not to rely on human, or even on christian sympathy, alone. Our great dependence is, and should be, on Him who is able to bear us up, and to sanctify all our tribulation to our good and his glory; therefore we have the direction embraced in the text, at the head of this article: "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." This is the peculiar privilege of the saints, of all who mourn in Zion, of any among you; and what a cheering consideration it is that we may come boldly to the throne of grace with our supplications, our prayers, our groanings, our tears, our burdens and complaints, with this warrant or order from the Lord, bidding us to bring them there, and leave them there, for we are instructed to cast all our cares on him, for he careth for us. As a good Shepherd careth for his flock, and as a father pitieth his own son that serveth him, so the Lord careth for his own elect who cry unto him day and night.

A feeling sense of our extreme poverty should not deter us, for although we have nothing in our hand to bring to our God as an offering, it is his throne of grace that we approach, and the poorer we feel the greater is the necessity of calling on him. If we were not poor, why should we ask for favors? The throne of grace is not accessible to the rich. The rich our God sends empty away, but he filleth the poor with good things. Nor should our darkness and doubtings deter us from approaching the mercy-seat, for our God assures us that they who fear him, though they walk in darkness and have no light, still it is said, "Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." The mercy-seat is open and

accessible to the saints, as well when involved in clouds and darkness, as when their skies are bright and clear; for God to them is a Refuge in distress and a very present help in trouble. He is not God afar off, but always at hand. He may be out of our sight, but his saints can never be obscured from his view. His ear is never heavy or dull that he cannot hear their crying. Hence the instruction, “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray.”

But what is prayer? It must be something more than a form of words, for when the saints pray they are forbidden to use vain repetitions, as the hypocrites do. Nor are we to indulge the thought that we are to be heard for our much speaking. Prayer does not consist in the position of the body, nor any form of words, though they be ever so sound or orthodox. God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. Without faith it is impossible to please God, and none but the spiritual, those who are born of the Spirit, possess that faith which is so indispensable to please God, for Paul says it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; it is a fruit of the Spirit, and it is the faith of the Son of God. Jesus Christ is himself both the Author and Finisher of it. Every one that is born of the Spirit does possess this principle of faith at all times, but it is not at all times sensibly felt by them, it being a purely spiritual principle in them; it is opposed by the flesh, and when the flesh predominates, when we walk after the flesh, that faith in us is obscured by clouds of doubt and unbelief which rise from the flesh, which is always at war with the Spirit. Then we grope along in the dark until we are delivered from the captivity of sin, which is in our members. Still that faith of the Son of God in us cannot die, for it is of God, and overcomes the world.

That faith which is born of God, according to I John 5:4, subsists on heavenly food, and will not rest long in us without its food from heaven. The saints cannot, therefore, remain

long in darkness, or in captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, before there is a secret breathing desire for deliverance, a sighing after the liberty of the gospel, a groaning, being burdened, a crying out, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” This struggling after light and spiritual enjoyment is the action of faith which must finally triumph over the flesh, and overcome the world. It is the prayer of faith that is fervent and effectual.

Christians, therefore, often pray fervently and effectually when there is no outward form or ceremony discoverable, and perhaps pray most when they feel as though they cannot and do not pray at all. The Spirit of Christ, which is in them, maketh intercession according to the will of God, but it is often with groanings which we cannot clothe with words, for it cannot be uttered; but it is nevertheless prayer, and it is the prayer of faith, and it will assuredly be heard, and in due time answered. We may sometimes be sadly cheated by the deceitfulness of the flesh, and think we are praying fervently for certain things, when our desires are only those of the flesh, and not the groanings or breathings of the Spirit. Hence we ask and we receive not, because we ask amiss. It is a great mercy to us that our fleshly desires are not gratified, that the things which we ask for and which our carnal passions desire, are not granted, to be consumed on our fleshly lusts, which war against the Spirit, for they would only tend to strengthen the flesh, the more vigorously to maintain the warfare against the law of the Spirit of life. But the Spirit of life and immortality, which dwells in all who are born of the Spirit, searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and knowing the mind of God, maketh intercession for us according to the will of God, and John says, “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the

petitions that we desired of him." (I John 5:14,15) Those who are addressed by the apostle James in our text are all m possession of this Spirit, all being born of it, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, therefore he says, "Is any among you afflicted?" That is, if any one among the saints is afflicted, it is his peculiar and inestimable privilege to pray. None others have the ability to pray with the spirit and with the understanding, for they possess neither, and in their absence all their prayers are but the vain expressions of the prompting of the carnal mind, which cannot please God.

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and they are not only many, but various, but their afflictions rise not out of the ground, neither do they come by chance, for God hath, for wise and gracious purposes, chosen them in a furnace of affliction, because he knoweth that it is good for them to be afflicted, it seems to humble them, to teach them their dependence on God, and to make them remember the throne of grace. Having nowhere else to look for succor and support, and deeply sensible of their pressing necessities, they are constrained to enter into their closets, and to shut the door; their desire is unto the Lord, they desire seclusion from the world, and, if possible, from themselves, to enter the secret chambers, which are only known to the saints, and there -

"Into the bosom of their God
Pour out their long complaints."

"Let him pray." Our Father seeth in secret - he knows our feeble frame. He bows his ear and bids us come even unto his seat, to come boldly, notwithstanding our sense of vileness, of unworthiness; no frowning terror clothes his brow to fright the timid, trembling suppliant from his presence, but as a child coming to a loving parent, so the saints approach and draw nigh unto God by the new and living way, which he hath consecrated for them through the

veil; that is, through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us. None can come to the Father but by Christ, and none who come by him will ask God to change the purpose or counsel of his own will for their gratification, but rather will they pray that they may be reconciled in all things to the righteous will of God; and while they pray from the fullness of their hearts that God may forgive their trespasses, as they forgive all who have trespassed against them, they know that unless they have that forgiving spirit in them which from the heart forgives those who trespass against them, neither will their heavenly Father forgive them their trespasses.

At this present time the saints are passing through a great fight of afflictions; we have fallen on exciting times; wars are raging in our land, our sons are called into the tented fields,

"Where blood and carnage
Clothe the ground in crimson,
Sounding with death groans."

Let all the afflicted saints then call mightily on the name of the Lord, as he affords us the spirit of grace and supplication, that he may support us under our present trials, and in his own good time and way restore peace and prosperity to our beloved country, and protect his dear children under the shadow of his wing, until the indignation be over past.

Ye saints of the most high God, pray without ceasing, and in all things give thanks unto God. And may the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Middletown, N.Y.,
October 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 266 – 271

JAMES 5:14,15.

Ohio, Dec. 30, 1867.

Friend Beebe: — I have been a reader of the "Signs of the Times" about ten years, and have not asked for your views on any subject until now; I will ask your views on James 5:14,15.

A Subscriber.

Reply: - The passage referred to this reads thus: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

These instructions are given to, and enjoined upon the saints, by one divinely inspired by the Holy Ghost, and duly authorized by our Lord Jesus Christ to sit in judgment over the twelve tribes of Israel, to whom this epistle is specially and exclusively addressed. However dull to understand, or slack we may be to practice according to these instructions, we cannot doubt concerning their vital importance, for all the laws and instructions given by our Lord Jesus Christ, through his holy apostles, are of vital importance; and if we lack wisdom to comprehend them, this faithful apostle reminds us of our privilege to ask for wisdom of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him (Chapter 1:5). Some have supposed that this instruction was only indicating so little light, we will submit what we have written, until called on for further explanations of our views.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 171 - 172

JAMES 5:19,20.

Remarks on James 5:19,20. “If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

Our brother T.S. Hatton, of Indiana, has requested an expression of our views on this text, especially on, “What death is spoken of?” The epistle of James, like those of all the other apostles, was addressed to the saints, recognized as “brethren,” and exposed to “diverse temptations,” into which when they should fall, they are admonished to count it all joy, from the consideration that the trial of their faith by such exposure to temptations, worketh patience. And in this text, the Holy Ghost, speaking by this apostle, very explicitly identifies the subjects to whom the words are spoken. “*Brethren,* if any of *you* do err.” By no fair or logical construction can these words be applied to any but the saints of God. That those who are indisputably the saints of God, and brethren of the apostles, born of the same spiritual parentage, called by the same grace, and heirs of the same most glorious immortality, are liable to err from the truth, and commit sin by so doing, is by this text established beyond successful controversy. The relative duty enjoined on all this peculiar brotherhood, to labor to convert from the error of his way any one who has thus erred, and to restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering their own liability also to err, and to require in turn the same faithful and fraternal service, is also very clearly inferred, from the encouraging assurance that they shall thereby save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins. Let us examine the subject.

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth." To err is to be wrong, either in judgment or in practice; and as none of the saints while here in the flesh are infallible, they may and sometimes do conceive erroneous views, and are betrayed into forbidden practices. To err from the truth is to be allured or drawn into error, either in faith or practice. The truth as it is in Jesus is the standard of righteousness, and all who have received the love of the truth that they may be saved are required to walk in the truth; to all others "God shall send strong delusion, that they may believe a lie." II Thessalonians.2: 11. In the mighty delusion, predicted expressly by the Spirit, that shall prevail in the latter times, many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. And as we are told that *they* shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. None can depart from the faith who have never adhered to it; nor can any turn away from the truth who have never been recognized as walking in it. It, therefore, must mean such as have, at least professed the faith, and held the truth. Christ is the Truth; any departure therefore from him, or from his laws, or footsteps, under false impressions, allurements, or seductions, is to err from the truth. The gospel is Christ, and therefore is truth, and any departure, or divergence from the gospel, in its doctrine, order or ordinances, is to err from the truth. The Scriptures are truth, and the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is especially given as the man of our counsel, standard of our faith, and rule of our practice as Christians, is the truth; to recede or diverge from that standard, from whatever motives, or under whatever impressions, is to err from the truth.

Again, the Spirit of truth which the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, is given as a Comforter to the saints, and shall lead them into all truth, by taking of the things of Jesus and shewing them to the saints,

is also truth; the saints are therefore required to try the spirits, [which they meet with, and which may exert an influence over them] whether they be of God; for if the spirit by which we are actuated be of God, it is the spirit of truth; to depart from its holy and gentle control is to err from the truth. The saints do not always realize what manner of spirit may be holding an influence over them. If they wish to call down fire, or thunderbolts of wrath upon their enemies, however much or justly provoked, the spirit that stirs up their ire is not that spirit of truth which teaches us to pity and pray for such as persecute and despite-fully use us. To depart from the spirit of Christ is to err from the truth, and to *sin,* not against a law that we are redeemed from and are no longer under, but against the law of Christ which we are under. Sin is a transgression of the law; and where there is no law there is no transgression, no sin. Being dead to the law by the body of Christ, and brought by newness of life under law to Christ, his love shed abroad in us brings us within the range of his jurisdiction as our Prince and Savior; for his precepts are all restricted to such as love him. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." His commandments are unto and upon all who love him; and if we depart from or disobey them, we err from the truth. Whatever may be the plausibility or sincerely entertained pretext or motive, if we feel unworthy to obey him, or neglect his mandates hoping for greater light or liberty, or if we believe some other thing, or some other way will please him fully as well, and perhaps better than a strict conformity to the precise precept or example he has given, still, from whatever may be the influence, motive or design, we err from the truth, and the nature of the error is the same, and calls for the faithful and brotherly watchcare and labor of our fellow members of the church of God.

"And one convert him." In obedience to the apostolic instruction and command. If a brother be overtaken in a

fault, ye that are spiritual restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness. The conversion here is a reclamation, convincing him that he is in error, and by faithful admonition and instruction restore him to the right way; as Paul labored with the Galatian churches when they had erred from the truth, and with the church at Corinth, and as Priscilla and Aquilla converted Apollos from the error of his way. Jesus says, "If thy brother hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." To convert is to change. But it is God alone who can quicken dead sinners, and give them life and brotherhood with the saints; but James is explicit in telling us that the conversion of which he speaks is a conversion "from the error of his way." And he whose faithful labors shall be, by the blessing of God, successful in thus reclaiming an erring brother, "Let him know, that he which converteth the *sinner* [for as we are commanded to walk in the truth, by the law of Christ, to err from the truth is a transgression of the law that the saints are under, and transgression is sin, and he who commits the transgression is a sinner against whatever law he transgressesl from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death." That is, he shall save that soul, or brother, or person, as these words in this connection are used interchangeably as meaning the same. In the preceding verse the erring offender is called a brother, "Brethren, if any of *you* do err;" and in this verse he is called a *sinner* and a *soul.* But that sinner or that soul is a brother who has erred from the truth.

We approach now that part of our subject on which brother Hatton desires us to be more particular. "Shall save a soul from death." What death? Not from the perdition of the ungodly, which is called the second death, and from which our Lord Jesus Christ has obtained for all his people "eternal redemption," for his blood cleanseth us from all guilt, and his blood can never lose its power. None can pluck them out of his hands; for they are kept by the power of God, through

faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed at the last time, and Jesus has pledged his sacred word that he will raise them up at the last day. The text cannot be construed so as to contradict the express declaration of Christ, "I give unto them *eternal life, and they shall never perish."* Nor does it mean that they shall be put to death after the manner of Moses, by stoning, or in any other way to be literally deprived of their natural life. But the death from which they shall be saved, is that of which Paul testifies, as a consequence of erring from the truth. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Romans 8:6 & 13. That vitality by which the saints are quickened is life; it is born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; but that which is born of the flesh, is that on which death hath passed, and that cannot inherit the kingdom of God. I Corinthians 15:50. "But if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness." Romans 8:10. "Knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord; [for we walk by faith, not by sight]. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." II Corinthians 5:6-8. These Scriptures clearly, to our mind, point out what death we enter into when we depart from Christ who is our life, and walk after the flesh, and are at home in the body, and walking by sight, and looking on the things which are seen, and which are carnal, and being turned away from the visions of faith which looks on things which are not seen, and which are eternal. And in this sense, how many of us have so far out-traveled Paul, that we can in truth say, we do not, like him, die daily? Here are to be seen and contrasted flesh and spirit, the one born of the flesh, the other born of God; one of corruptible, the other of incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever. On the one, death has passed, the other is immortality. One is darkness, the other is light in the Lord.

One is natural, sensual, carnal; the other is spiritual, pure and incorruptible. One is death; the other is life, joy and peace. We cannot err from the truth without sowing to the flesh, and in sowing to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption.

When, instead of trusting in God and walking by faith, we appeal to our own carnal minds, and walk in the sight of our own natural understanding, we are sure to find that way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Death in the true sense of these Scriptures. Death to our spiritual comforts, in holy communion with God, and enjoyment of the things of the Spirit of God. It is a great error then for a child of God to walk after the flesh, think his own thoughts, and speak his own words, and rely upon his own understanding; and if any who are spiritual, that is who are being led by the Spirit, shall convert an erring brother from the error of his ways, he shall save his brother from that delusion and error, that is so certain, if persisted in, to plunge him in darkness, barrenness, depression and death.

But we presume the apostle James had some allusion to the types and figures of the old legal dispensation. He writes to the brethren whom he recognizes as the “twelve tribes,” showing that he takes the ancient tribes of Jacob, as figurative of the spiritual tribes over which the apostles preside in judgment, on twelve thrones. The circumcision which worship God in spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus, and having no confidence in the flesh. The covenant of works under which the carnal tribes served, consigned the soul that sinned to death. Whether put literally to death, or only separated by uncleanness from the congregation of the Lord, they were dead to the congregation of Israel until purged or purified by blood, or until an atonement was made for them. So the order of the church of Christ was typified, in which unruly or disorderly members are put away from the

communion and fellowship of the church, until they be converted from the error of their way. How many who once walked in fellowship with the churches, have thus been expelled from their privileges in the church, and to the church have become as dead as they were before they made a profession of discipleship? Eyes have been, by a faithful enforcement of the discipline of the church, plucked out, and cast away from the body; right hands, or feet have been cut off, where the law of Christ has required, that the body, the church, might enter into life, rather than by unlawfully retaining disaffected members, be cast into hell; that is into confusion, darkness, disorder, rebellion and destruction. It is in this definition of death that we understand the apostle John to speak of a sin that is unto death, which he does not say it shall be prayed for. I John 5:16. There were some false brethren in Paul's time, who came in privately to spy out the liberty of the saints; to whom he says, We give place by subjection, no, not for an hour. Galatians 2:4,5. In this sense too, the brother who converts his erring brother, may know that he has saved his brother from expulsion from the fellowship of the saints, so that his place and privileges are retained in the church.

"And shall hide a multitude of sins." When a brother is being allured or drawn into error, in doctrine or practice, if seasonably reclaimed, and thoroughly converted from the error of his way, it requires not to be mentioned to even the church, or to any who do not already know it. "Thou hast gained thy brother." But if the erring brother persists in the wrongs, others must know of it; one or two are to assist, and if unsuccessful, it must be told to the church. And if he refuse to hear the church, he must be put away; for the authority which Christ has invested in his church must be respected, acknowledged and submitted to, or the offender must be excluded from fellowship. But if any one of those obstinate offenders can be reclaimed, he is saved alive, and in

standing, and his disorder is to be forgotten, or not made public.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 419 – 425

JEREMIAH 2:33

Elder Beebe: - Please give your views on Jeremiah 2:33, and oblige an Inquirer After Truth.

REPLY: The passage proposed for consideration reads as follows: “Why trimmest thou thy way to seek love? therefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways.”

This searching appeal was made by the Lord God of Israel to Jerusalem by the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet, after having rehearsed some of the wonderful works of God in his dealings with Israel, in breaking for them the Egyptian yoke, and conducting them in safely through the dreary wilderness, and putting them in possession of the promised land, and their ingratitude to him for his signal mercies, and their rejection of him as their God, their transgression of his laws, and their abominable idolatry. This righteous reproof, though in interrogative form, clearly implies a charge of inconstancy, a departure from the Lord, and a restless desire to secure the love of strangers, and to impart the knowledge of her ways to the wicked.

In the few remarks which we design to make on this text, we will notice that the Jerusalem which is addressed and reproved in our subject, is a type of the church of God under the gospel dispensation, and her wicked lewdness and idolatry prefigures the waywardness of those under the present dispensation, who having espoused the cause of the Redeemer, and professed allegiance to our Lord Jesus Christ, have, like their prototype committed the same two evils which are charged on Israel in the thirteenth verse, namely: “They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” If we would read the rebukes which the Lord administered to national Israel to profit, we should remember

that these things were written for our learning, and examine carefully whether we are not to some extent involved in the abominations by which Israel was polluted. If we are the spiritual Jerusalem, of which the former was only the type, then we also have been redeemed from an house of bondage, and led forth by the mighty hand and outstretched arm of the God of our salvation. We also (but in a spiritual and experimental sense) have been preserved from the perils of the wilderness; we also have witnessed the awful majesty of almighty God, as he displayed himself from the clouded summit of the trembling mount which was convulsed at the presence of Jehovah, and we too have heard in thunder tones the proclamation of his fiery law. We have also professed to have entered into the land of rest, the gospel kingdom. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." We have ceased from our own works, as God ceased from all the works which he had made, when he rested on the seventh day. We have renounced all hope in every other name, we have solemnly engaged to take on us his yoke, and learn of him who is meek and lowly; and like Israel, we have repeatedly said, All that the Lord our God has commanded us, that will we do. But how have we kept the pledge? As individuals, every saint is heard to confess with deep contrition his short-comings. But the reproof was applied to Jerusalem, collectively, when in a state of deep degeneracy, when her priests had ceased to inquire after the Lord, and they who handled the law were utterly ignorant of God. We cannot conceive that this state of things is always applicable to the whole church of God, neither was this at all times the case with the old Jerusalem. If we understand the bearing of this subject in its typical bearing, it is applicable to the church, or to any branch of the church of God, whenever and wherever they depart from the Lord as their only fountain of living waters, either in doctrine or practice, in faith or in order, in departing from the precepts, ordinances or spirit of the gospel of our salvation.

The special charge implied against Jerusalem was that she trimmed her way, or shaped her course with a view to seek the applause of the world, or to seek love. Not satisfied with the love of God which passeth knowledge, which is unspeakable and full of glory, but seeking for the illicit love of strangers. Jerusalem, in the type stood in matrimonial relation to the Lord, and hence whenever she went into idolatry, or after other gods, or whenever she fell in love with and worshiped the works of her own hands, she was charged with the crime of adultery. So the New Jerusalem which John saw coming down from God out of heaven, was called the bride, the Lamb's wife, and bound by the most solemn obligations of fidelity to our Lord Jesus Christ, bound to love and serve him only, and to be satisfied with his love. When, therefore, the church or any of her branches become fascinated with the world, or the fashions thereof, and desirous to become popular and pleasing to the world, or to be in league with Antichrist, her desire betrays an adulterous inclination. When that inordinate desire predominates, she shapes her course, or trims her way to seek their applause, and secure their love, although the Husband of the bride has plainly admonished her, that if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Can he whose love for his bride was so great that he for her sake became poor, that he bare her sins in his own body, that he gave himself for her, that he might redeem her from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; can he whose love for his bride was stronger than death, be satisfied with the divided affections of his bride in return? Or will he allow her to seek for love among strangers? Except a man hate his father and mother, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple, saith the Redeemer. It may seem strange that the bride of the Lamb of God should ever find it in her heart to depart from him when well she knows that in his presence is fullness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore, but so it is; though the ox knoweth his owner, and

the stupid ass his master's crib, yet Israel doth not know, the Lord's people do not consider.

But let us consider the symptoms of inconstancy: How do churches, when in pursuit of unlawful love, trim their way? Their legitimate way is the way of holiness, it is to follow the footsteps of Christ, it is to worship God in the Spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to have no confidence in the flesh, but to be pleasing and fascinating to strangers, her ways require trimming. This term implies both cutting off and putting on. As when we trim a tree or a vine we lop off some or all its natural branches, but when we trim a dress, or a person, or a house, or carriage, we put on such ornaments as we may fancy will please the taste and command the admiration of beholders. The term in both applications is appropriate in setting forth the degeneracy of churches, and individual christians when *suffered* to depart from the simplicity of the gospel in order to gain the applause of the world, or to be at peace with anti-Christ.

First, there is a lopping off. We perceive that those whose treacherous love and favor we are lusting after, cannot bear our way, as it has been plainly marked out in the divine rule, and as long as we so tenaciously contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, we cannot have their company; we must be a little and despised flock, our name must be cast out as evil, and we must be regarded as the offscouring of all things; and in that case, the noble ones of the earth, the learned, the wealthy and the great, will not mingle with us; but if we will trim our way by avoiding those things which never fail to make diviners angry, say less about the divine sovereignty of God, the total depravity and utter inability of men, lop off eternal unconditional election, predestination, the special irresistible work of God in regeneration, the infallibly efficacious calling of all the chosen and redeemed people of our God, and the special atonement

of Christ, as being exclusively for the elect, and even if we are obliged to believe in our hearts that all these are clearly demonstrated in the Bible, as the truth of God, still quit giving offence to the enemy by preaching them publicly; trim a little and perhaps we may convince the world that we are not quite so bad as they have taken us to be. When we have succeeded in trimming down the preaching so as to prevent any offensive doctrine to ring from our pulpits we may next set about trimming the ordinances. Baptism as instituted by Christ himself is objected to by those whose love we court, but what they have substituted in its place is so modified as to suit the world. Then as we would gain the esteem of strangers, let nothing be heard in defense of truth, nor in opposing or exposing error on that, or on any other subject. And as the world regards us as too tight-laced in regard to our communion, so long as we exclude from the table all unbaptized persons, and all others who do not walk in the faith and order of the divine rule, by being more accommodating, we may fill up our churches, and compare favorably in members and in respectability with other denominations around us. It has been the practice of the gospel church in all ages to require an evidence of a regenerated state of all whom they admit to baptism and church membership, but if we would please the world that practice must also be trimmed, and if applicants cannot enter in among us by the door, what harm, if we just let them climb up some other way?

One source of annoyance to the strangers in the untrimmed way of Zion has always been that our watchmen, whom God has set up on the walls, have been in the habit of sounding an alarm whenever they have seen the enemy approaching. How uncourteous that practice seems! Why not let them come, who knows but they would be good friends, if we would only let them come in peaceably? When we see the wolf coming, if he has wrapped himself snugly in sheeps’

clothing, does not that show that he loves the sheep, and desires their company? Why then scare them away by our alarm; who knows but what if we let them in, they will conclude to become sheep themselves some day? Can there be any reasonable doubt that this kind of trimming would cause the offence of the cross to cease? And if the world cannot be persuaded to join the church, the church would join the world, and so the distinction so much complained of would cease.

As *trimming* implies a putting on as well as trimming off, it may imply such decorations as the carnal mind may suggest to attract the attention and fascinate those who could never appreciate the beauty of the church of God as her Savior has arrayed her. In Isaiah 3:16-23, the daughters of Zion are described in their fancy trimmings, haughtily walking with stretched forth necks, and wanton eyes, mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet, displaying the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains and the bracelets and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the head-bands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings and the nose-jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods, and the veils, etc. Inspired wisdom has employed the foregoing figures to set forth the folly and wickedness of the church, or any of her daughters, or branches, when dissatisfied with the garments of salvation in which God has clothed his church, and desiring to be fashionable, and to please the world, and to allure and draw to her embrace those who have never passed from death unto life, she trims her ways to seek love.

Look at some branches of the church which stood on gospel grounds forty years ago, were *then* satisfied to dwell alone

and not be reckoned with the nations. Where are they today? Abroad and seeking love. See how they are lumbered down with tinkling ornaments, with Missionary Societies, Tract Societies, Sabbath School Unions, Theological Schools, and educated ministry, cringing to Antichrist, and mincing as they go to seek for proselytes. Why have they put on all the fashionable institutions common to the daughters of Babylon, if it be not to seek love, aye, forbidden love? Their necks are stretched forth with haughtiness as they mince along, tinkling with the ornaments of their feet to attract the adulterous gaze of a wicked and adulterous generation. In short, everything attached to the name of religion, which is not divinely authorized by the great Head of the church, has been thus put on, by way of trimming, whether it be in doctrine or practice, and all to secure popularity, to make converts, to fill up churches, and gratify a wicked propensity to worship the works of men's hands.

Wherefore hast thou also taught the wicked ones thy ways? Many, if not all, of these tinkling ornaments, especially Sunday and Theological Schools, Bible Classes, Tracts and Missionary Societies, are put on for the avowed purpose of *teaching the wicked her ways.* That is, for teaching religion, for saying every man to his neighbor, and every man to his brother, "Know the Lord." The professed object is to make converts, to evangelize the heathen, and teach the ways of Zion to the world.

We might enlarge upon this subject, but our time and space will not allow us to pursue the application of the figures in all their bearing. But in closing our remarks, suffer a word of admonition. To the ministers of the word, we would repeat the solemn warning given by the apostle, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (I Tim. 4:15) To the churches we would repeat the solemn

warning, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” (Gal. 1:8,9) “Ye did run well; who did hinder you, that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.” (Gal. 5:7-9) To all the saints we would repeat the command of the Lord, “Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.”

Middletown, N.Y.,
January 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 114 - 120

JEREMIAH 6:16

Elder G. Beebe: - Like the woman of Canaan, I persist in troubling you for your views on a portion of the Scriptures which I see so often alluded to in the "Signs of the Times", namely, Jeremiah 6:16: "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." Your compliance will much oblige.

Matilda E. H. Welch.
Sikesville, MD,
January 6, 1862.

The above request was received in January last, at a season of the year when we were in receipt of more requests of the kind than we can respond to; it was laid aside for the time, and overlooked until the present. In now attempting to offer such views as we have upon the text, we hope that we may be enabled to present to the mind of our inquiring friend, and to others, that which may be, with the blessing of God, to some extent profitable and edifying.

It was the lot of the prophet Jeremiah to bear many messages of reproof from the Lord to the rebellious Israelites from time to time, for they were a stiff-necked and rebellious people. In the chapter from which the text under consideration is taken, the prophet pointed out some of the transgressions of Israel, and announced the judgments of the Lord which were impending, and with these faithful reproofs and solemn admonitions he repeats to them, from the mouth of God, the message contained in our text, saying, "Thus saith the Lord." Truly this was unquestionable authority; and as they professed to be the people of the Lord, in a peculiar sense, and were called by his name, and stood in a covenant

relationship to him as their supreme Potentate, to whom they had so often and so solemnly pledged themselves, Whatsoever the Lord commanded us, that will we do, one would suppose they would at once receive the mandate, and with all their ability endeavor to obey. But alas, they rebelled against the Lord, and said they would not do as they were commanded. This particular command which they refused to respect was, “Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask,” etc. The command to stand in the ways implied that they were out of the ways, or had departed from the ways of the Lord. The ways of the Lord in which they were required to stand, and to walk, were clearly pointed out in the covenant, which embraced them. In that covenant they were required to stand; but they had often departed from it, and had turned frequently aside to by and forbidden paths. In that covenant they must stand in order that they might see, for from no other standpoint could they see clearly the things which they ought to see and fully comprehend. Out of the ways they were in the dark, and consequently they were ignorant, and required to be instructed in the ways of the Lord more perfectly; hence they were commanded to ask for the old paths. From this injunction we infer that they had got off from the old track, and probably into some new paths which had led them astray. This was frequently the case with them, and they were often reproved for their departure from the right way of the Lord, or from the way in which the Lord had commanded them to pursue. But now they are commanded to ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and to walk therein. No new path or way could answer, but one course was lawful for them, and the way which the Lord had marked out, and which had been traveled by the patriarchs, was the good way; it was good because God had directed it, and good because he approved of it, and good because in it they should find rest for their souls. But they had said by their words, or by their deeds, or by both words and deeds, that they would not walk in the old paths, in the good way, and

consequently the way of peace they knew not, while pursuing their own newly invented ways and traveling in the paths of their own choice.

Stiff-necked and rebellious as the carnal Israelites were, their waywardness is recorded as a warning to the christian church of God, under the gospel dispensation, and written for our instruction. In that rebellious people we have a type of the church of God in her gospel organization. The covenant of works in which they were embraced was but the shadow of the covenant of grace and peace, in which the spiritual Israel are held, and the ceremonial law with all its precepts, ordinances and institutions, was a shadow of good things to come, pointing to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, written and engraved not on tables of stone, but written in their hearts and engraved on their inward parts, and pointing them to the New Testament as containing the infallible rule of their christian obedience.

The inconstancy, disobedience and wanderings of Israel under the Levitical law and priesthood, point to the disobedience and wanderings of the people of God, of whom they were the type, and indicate the shortcomings and inconstancy, which all christians more or less feel and deplore in themselves, and in others who profess to be the children of the new and better covenant. And therefore the spirit of the admonition of the text may be regarded as applicable to the children of God at the present time, especially to those who have departed from the laws and institutions of the gospel, and to those who are born of the Spirit and have not owned their Lord and Master by walking in the ordinances and institutions of his kingdom. To all such may it not be said, “Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths,” etc?

First, the heaven-born but disobedient child, who has not entered upon the ways appointed for the humble disciples to walk in; is it not the voice of the Lord which calls him to come out of Babylon, or out of and be separate from the world, and follow the Lamb whithersoever he leads the way? To follow him in the sacred ordinance of baptism? Thus saith the Lord Jesus, “Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” Stand ye in the ways, in all the ways which he has instituted by precept, in all the ways that he has marked out by his example. The servant of Abraham said, “I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master’s brethren.” But there is but one way to that house for those who have a right to enter there, and that is by the door. He that entereth not in by the door, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. The Lord leads the blind in a way which they know not, and in paths which they have not known; and when he found Jacob in a waste howling wilderness, he led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. “So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.” Christ is himself the way. In him we are chosen, redeemed and saved, and in him we have our standing; and as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so we are exhorted to walk in him, as members of him, of his body, his flesh and his bones. We are in him as we are vitally identified with his church, which is his body, and in him, in this sense of the word, the child of God is commanded to stand, and see, and to ask for the old paths, etc. We are in him as the way when we are within the sacred precincts of his authority, standing in the letter and spirit of his precepts, and here we can see, and inquire, and ask for the good way. We are not at liberty to devise or invent some new way, or attempt to improve upon the old way which God has cast up for the righteous to walk in. The sons of Hagar may ridicule the good old way, and point the finger of scorn at those who stand or walk therein, and sneeringly say, You are behind the times, You do not

keep pace with the progress of the world; still we are to ask only for the old paths, wherein we trace the footsteps of the flock of Christ. We are told that there is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. All other ways and paths, except the old divinely authorized ways of Zion, are the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Not the new convert alone should heed the warning of our text; old disciples who have traveled long are to take heed lest they depart from the ancient pathway of holiness. To them the solemn admonition is addressed, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, the good way. If any have wandered, become bewildered, benighted and doubtful, they can depend on no other guide. The voice of the Lord recalls them to the path which they have departed from, and when they are wandering from the Lord they shall hear a voice behind them saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it.” That voice will direct to the old and good way, to the way of peace and rest. When bewildered travelers ask of men the way they desire to pursue, they will often tell of new routes, shorter distances, smoother roads and bypaths, etc.; but we are cautioned in the text to be sure and ask for the old paths, which will be distinguished from all others by the waymarks, which are only known by the wayfaring pilgrims who travel there. Travelers in the ways of Zion should be cautious of whom they ask in regard to the way.

We are informed that deceivers are in the world, some crying lo here, and others lo there, but believe them not. One reason why the psalmist so much desired to dwell in the house of the Lord forever, was that he might behold the beauty of the Lord and “inquire in his temple.” Reliable instruction will be found there, and only there, for the word of the Lord shall go forth from Zion, and on the word of the Lord alone it is safe for christians to rely. Elsewhere we may

be informed what learned doctors think, and what popular commentators say, but in Zion the humble inquirer will hear what the Lord has said, and a "thus saith the Lord" is abundantly sufficient for them. Having made the inquiry, and obtained the important instruction, having found the good old way, marked as it is by the footprints of the Savior, and by his apostles and primitive disciples, the instruction is, "and walk therein." There is no cause to hesitate; none ever stood in this way, or ever saw this way, but those whose privilege it is to walk therein. No fowl knoweth it, the vulture's eye never saw it, the lion's whelp never trod in it, nor shall fools err therein. For we are told it shall be for those, the wayfaring men, etc. If therefore God has revealed this way of holiness to any of us, however poor, weak, sinful or unworthy we may feel ourselves to be, we may rest assured that he has called us by grace to walk therein, and that we shall never find true gospel rest to our souls only as we walk therein. But they that wait upon the Lord shall have their strength renewed, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and walk and not be faint; they shall find rest to their souls. This is only desirable to those who are tired, weary and faint, but these are the very characters whom Jesus calls, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This is truly encouraging, for he is a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

"But they said, We will not walk therein." Ungrateful, rebellious and wicked as it is, young converts and old disciples, when they withhold their obedience to the precepts of the Lord, do say by their disobedience that they will not walk therein; but the Lord has said, If they walk not in my statutes, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and

their iniquities with many stripes. See that ye refuse not him that speaketh, for if they (who come to Mount Sinai) escaped not who refused him (Moses) who spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven, whose voice once shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven, etc. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.”

Middletown, N.Y.,
November 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 277 – 287

“IS THERE NO BALM IN GILEAD?” – JEREMIAH VIII. 22.

From infancy we have been in the habit of hearing this passage referred to as implying a full provision in the gospel to meet the necessities of the Lord’s people, and the Gileaditish physician has been supposed to mean the Lord Jesus Christ. That there are healing virtues in the gospel for all the complaints of God’s people, there can be no doubt, and that Christ is a great, good and infallible Physician, is equally certain, but that the passage refers to the gospel as the balm of Gilead, and to Christ, as the Physician there, is to our mind by no means so clear.

The striking language of our text is used in a connection which seems rather to forbid that application of it. By the mouth of the prophet the Lord charged Israel with gross idolatry, and threatened to visit upon them the severest judgments, to break them up and scatter them as a nation, and surely to consume them. Under these circumstances the prophet Jeremiah takes up a lamentation over them, saying, “For the hurt of the daughter of my people am I hurt; I am black; astonishment hath taken hold on me.” And then he demands, “Is there no balm in Gilead? ia there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?” Balm was one of the productions of Gilead, and an article of commerce, from the time that Jacob sent balm to Egypt in exchange for corn; it possesses a medicinal property for soothing and healing diseases which are common to the children of men, and skillful physicians were in the habit of prescribing it successfully to their patients, for physical diseases. But those medicines which human science can understand, prepare and apply successfully in natural diseases, fail entirely to effect a cure

for the depravity of the human heart, and are equally abortive in averting the judgments of God. The children of Israel, in their wicked departure from the Lord, like all Arminians, had relied on their own resources for comfort and deliverance from afflictions, and now in the time of their calamity, the prophet demands of them the reason why the hurt of the daughter of his people is not healed? Why they have not applied their balm, or why their physician had failed? How natural it is for us, when left to our own wisdom, to conclude that we have within our reach some power by which to secure the favor of God, some balm to cure us of the leprosy of our depraved nature, some medical skill to direct us in the application of our medicines, to make them effectual. But when taught by the Spirit to feel that we are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon us, we soon lose all confidence in our own balm, and in the skill of all human physicians. Miserable comforters are they all, and they are all physicians of no value. Then the text, Jer. xlvi. 11, seems more applicable to us: "Go up to Gilead and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt, in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured." Thus are we taught to discard all our own plans, and schemes, balms and physicians, and being completely cut off from all our own reliances, to fall down before the Lord, exclaiming, "Lord, save, or I perish." There certainly is no balm short of the Savior's precious blood, nor any physician that can apply the healing medicine effectually to us, but Jesus Christ.

"There is but one Physician
That can cure a sinsick soul."

Middletown, N. Y.
Nov. 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 261 - 263

JEREMIAH 9:5

Friend Beebe: - In closing I will request your views through the Signs, on Jeremiah 9:5 "They have built also the high places of Baal to burn their sons with fire for burnt offerings unto Baal, which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind."

This text and its connection, presents in striking language the awful depravity and base idolatry of the kings and rulers of Judah in departing from the laws and institutions of the Lord, which were strictly enjoined upon the children of Israel as the peculiar people of God. They were commanded to reverence, worship and obey no other god than Jehovah, and all the rites and ceremonies, offerings and ordinances by which they were to serve him were restricted to those which were instituted, ordained and commanded them by him. Under no pretense, not even of serving or honoring him, were they allowed to deviate from what he communicated to them. If the altars of rough stone seemed unsightly and antiquated they were not allowed to apply the tool of the workmen upon it, nor to supercede it by building altars of brick. What God commanded them, comprised all that they had liberty to do. If in any case they went beyond the word of the Lord, the cutting reproof was severely applied, "*Who hath required this at your hand?*" To do what God had not commanded was equivalent to a leaving undone what God had commanded; and in either case they were guilty of a transgression of the law. Their existence and prosperity as a nation, in a temporal point of view, was connected by the covenant under which they existed, with their obedience, and their calamities, and temporal visitations of wrath from the hand of God, was connected with their disobedience. Thus they very strikingly typified their spiritual priesthood and holy nation which is

embraced in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we may hereafter have occasion more fully to observe.

The kings of Judah and of Israel were many of them exceedingly prone to idolatry and to do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord and to cause the people of Israel, to depart from the law of their God.

As a general thing these wicked princes were not lacking for prophets well trained to suit their wicked designs, who, to please their kings, and secure royal patronage were ever ready to use their own mouths and say, The Lord saith; even when God had not spoken by them. The example of all the prophets of Ahab, with one mouth, and with a lying spirit therein, saying to him and to Jehosaphat, "*Go and prosper, and the Lord will deliver Ramoth Gilead into your hand,*" is but one instance among hundreds which might be referred to. But of all the instances of rebellion against God, perhaps none on record is more horrible than the case presented in our subject. They had not only set up another god in defiance of the command, "*Thou shalt have no other god before me*," but they had instituted ordinances of the most revolting in-human and murderous character, by which places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire, for an offering to Baal. Frightfully, barbarous and brutal as these excesses may seem, they were performed under a cloak of high toned piety. These murders were committed as a religious devotion, and under the idea of improvements in their divinity. And from some expressions in the text, it would seem that they even claimed that they had express authority from the God of heaven for their abominations. But in the words of our text the profane and blasphemous imputation is repelled; and God, by the mouth of his inspired prophet Jeremiah, emphatically declares that he had not commanded, nor even contemplated commanding them to do such things. The holy mind of God was not the fountain from which, nor into which such

corruption's, could possibly flow. "*Which I commanded not, nor spake it, neither came it into my mind.*"

We are not to understand by any words used in our text, that the wickedness of the kings of Judah, has been bidden from the pre-science of the omniscient God, who has with unerring accuracy declared the end from the beginning; for all things are naked to his eye. Indeed such a conclusion would betray a lamentable ignorance of the perfection's of our God, and of the general tenor of divine testimony. The plain and evident meaning of the words, when construed so as to harmonize with the whole revelation which God has made to us of his infinity, is that he had never commanded, nor intimated by any communication made by him, in all the law and the prophets, that he required this abominable wickedness from their hands, and farther, that he had never contemplated, or designed to authorize any such things, nor had such a purpose ever existed in his mind. If such a thought had ever found place in his mind, it would be there yet; for He is of one mind and none can turn him. It really seems passing strange that any who profess to believe that God is immutable, should for a moment suppose this or any other portion of the scriptures would bear a construction involving a sentiment in contradiction of the immutability and prescience of the eternal Jehovah. We can with as much propriety assail, or dispute the holiness, truth, and justice of God, or any other of the attributes of his infinite being, as to question his immutability. He has said, "*I am the Lord, I change not, therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.*" The Lord does not say, nor intimate, that the wickedness of the idolatrous kings was new to him. He was speaking of what he had not commanded, spoken nor thought of commanding.

Now as we hold, according to the word, that these things which were written of old were written for our instruction, it

is proper that we should inquire prayerfully, what lesson of instruction this record presents for our benefit, either in a way of admonition, or edification.

The Kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem were a type, as we have already intimated, of what we call the visible church under the gospel dispensation. As the old Jerusalem, which is Mt Sinai, in Arabia, and in bondage with her children, was the type of the New Jerusalem, so the inhabitants of the former Jerusalem must represent the inhabitants of the latter whom Christ has made kings and priests unto God, and may we not proceed still farther and say, as the king and inhabitants in the inhabitants in the type manifested a strong propensity to idolatry, so in the anti-typical church, there are sometimes to be found some who betray as strong a disposition to depart from the simplicity of the gospel of our Redeemer, and lead off into idolatry, answering in the figure, to that charged in our subject on the men of Judah?

For instance, Baal was a very popular and fashionable god, with the kings of Judah, he had many prophets and many worshippers in the days of Elijah, while the prophet of the Lord was companionless and alone, at least he so supposed. When Ahab and Jezebel served Baal, nearly all the inhabitants of Jerusalem followed their example. There were times when idolatry prevailed, to an alarming degree; but occasionally a Jehu, or some other kings was raised up to destroy the idols out of the land; but still after all the reformations, some vestiges of idolatry always remained; enough to prove that the children of Judah and Israel were a stiff-necked and rebellious people.

Now let us search diligently and see if there are no idols among the professed children of God, or of our spiritual Judah, under the present dispensation. Why did the beloved

disciple and apostle John exhort, "*Little children, keep yourselves from idols*"? Covetousness is idolatry, and is there no covetousness among the professed people of our Lord?

The principle of idolatry is that which draws the mind always from God, from Christ, to trust in and to ascribe to the works of our own hands that honor which belongs exclusively to God. If Jerusalem, that is the church of Christ, were to be now searched as with lighted candles, can we flatter ourselves that no idols would be found among us? Would none be found ascribing salvation to means, instrumentality's, efforts, missions, funds, free-will, or human power? Alas, there is too much reason to fear that the most devoted servants of the living God, like Jehu, after displaying their zeal for God in destroying the idols out of the land, would be found to have retained some favorite idols for their own use, as Jehu did. Ah little children, remember the admonition, Keep yourselves from idols.

Now there were many idols among the ancient Israelites, but as we have said, Baal was a very popular god, and it had become fashionable to worship him, and to make the most extravagant offerings to him. The principle object assigned for this strong propensity in the Israelites to worship Baal and other idols was that they might be like the nations round about them, which were altogether given to idolatry. Now should we suppose for a moment that modern missionism, or human means, for the salvation of sinners, or any or all of the religious inventions of the present age for the professed purpose of executing or aiding in the execution of that salvation which the scriptures ascribe alone to our Lord Jesus Christ, were the Baal of the present day, how many, dear reader, could you find within the limit of your acquaintance, who have in no sense of the word bowed down to this Baal? That God has a reserved people now as well as in Elijah's day we do verily believe; a remnant according to the election of

grace; and O, that we may be found among them, as the reserved and preserved of the Lord.

But there is one thing farther we wish to call the attention of God's dear children to, namely, the false pretentions on the part of wicked rulers in religious professions, who plead their idolatrous doctrines and practices, that in them they are doing God a service. That he has in some way enjoined on us the work of saving sinners, or of procuring and securing our own individual salvation. But does not the subject under consideration suggest the enquiry, Who hath required these things at our hands? If Christ our king has so commanded us, then we can easily point to the chapter and verse in the New Testament wherein such command is recorded, but if no such authority can be found in that sacred volume, is it not a fearful consideration, that he shall not only judge the world in righteousness at the last day, but "*The Lord shall judge his people*"? It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, when Christ shall declare that he has given no such command, has instituted no such ordinances, has uttered no sayings to justify such things, and that it has never entered his mind either to command or to approve of them.

Again, in the type, the kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem were charged with building the high places of Baal, to burn their sons with fire, burnt offerings to the popular and fashionable idol. And are there not at this day such rulers among the people, who are charged with making God's people howl, in consequence of their oppression and idolatry, and by leading them clandestinely into bye and forbidden paths, subjecting them to the fire, and all in honor of some popular and fashionable idols of the present age. Within our own observation, if we are not greatly mistaken, we have witnessed the desolation of churches, which were once in a flourishing condition, their sons or members have been made to pass through fiery trials, and those who have ruled them,

have manifestly been the cause of leading them into their difficulties; and all this in honor to some principle of the modern idolatry, they have departed from the faith, the order and the practice of the gospel of the blessed god. This advantage they have generally gained by holding out the pretence that the Lord has commanded or authorized their course. But the Lord said of such prophets of old, that he had not spoken by them; and we may also rest assured that God has not spoken by any of the prophets, teachers, or rulers of the present time who are now thrusting with side and shoulder, that that which is lame may be turned aside from the truth. We are well assured that Christ the great Captain of our salvation has not commanded anything to be preached or practiced in his name which cannot be found on divine record; neither has it come into his mind to give any such authority. Therefore, "If I, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you any other gospel than that which the apostles preached, let him be accursed." May God, our heavenly Father, deliver us from all idolatry, will-worship and delusion, and banish from our hearts every rival to the government of our only and blessed Potentate, the Lord of lords, and King of kings, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit be glory, honor, praise, and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Middletown, N.Y.,
January 15, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe

JEREMIAH XXXII.

BRETHREN BEEBE: – If you have time and light on Jeremiah xxxii. 7, 8, 27, 35, please give us your view on the chapter, but especially on the portions of it which are expressed in the verses referred to, and obligate a poor sinner saved by grace, if saved at all, for no creature help can save a sinner.

Truly yours,
E. S. LEGGETT.
Little Red, Ark., Feb. 17, 1881.

REPLY. – We cannot claim that we have any special light on the chapter on which our views are solicited; but we will offer a few general remarks on the subject as we may be led, and submit what we may write to the consideration of brother Leggett, and to our readers generally.

At the time indicated, when this word of the Lord came unto Jeremiah, it found him incarcerated in a prison for having incurred the displeasure of Zedekiah, king of Judah, by faithfully declaring the message of God concerning the impending captivity of Judah and Jerusalem for their idolatry and wicked departure from the law of the Lord; but as no prison walls can repel the word of the Lord, which goeth out of his mouth like the rain and the snow from heaven, and which no created power can successfully resist, so came the word of the Lord, at this, as at all times, unto the prophet Jeremiah, which could not be turned back until it had fully accomplished that for which it was sent.

In the absence of absolute predestination, no prophet could with certainty have foretold of coming events, either of mercy or of wrath. The inspiration by which God spake unto the patriarchs by the prophets gives irrefragable demonstration of the determinate counsel, foreknowledge

and infinite prescience of the all-wise God. This was clearly demonstrated in the fearful prediction of the tempest of wrath which was soon to drive the king of Judah and his subjects into captivity, stating with unerring precision by whom they were to be captured, the place of their captivity, and the exact time they should be held in Babylon, and when and by whom God would deliver them.

Jeremiah had to encounter the violent opposition of false prophets, who flattered the king that these terrible predictions of Jeremiah should not come to pass. The command of God to the prophet, in whom was the right of redemption of his nephew's field, to make that redemption purchase, seems to have been designed as a sign of the final redemption of the remnant that should be ultimately delivered from captivity, and return to their inheritance in Jerusalem. This we infer from the fourteenth and fifteenth verses: “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.” And looking still further through the type to the redemption of the remnant of God's chosen people from sin and transgression by the blood of their divine Kinsman, according to the election of grace, the redemption of the field was designed to indicate the final restoration of the Jews to their inheritance in Jerusalem, and also to point to the redemption of the people of God which are in Christ Jesus our Lord, and it certainly was a sign to them of the certain fulfillment of the word of the Lord, which was fully realized by them in their Babylonish captivity, and in their ultimate deliverance and restoration. The terrible judgments predicted by Jeremiah were fully realized by the Jews for their transgressions and base idolatry; and also the deliverance promised in the

thirty-seventh verse, and to the end of the chapter, was fulfilled to the letter at the appointed time, according to the word of the Lord by the prophet.

The thirty-fifth verse, on which our brother desired our views, reads thus: “And they built the hig places of Baaal, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire unto Molech; which I command them not, neither came it into my mind, that they should to this abomination, to cause Judah to sin.” Baal, or Bel, which signifies ruler or lord, was an idol god of the Phoenicians and Canaanites, and his high places were those consecrated places in which his worshipers paid homage to him, and the people of Israel were often detected in bowing at his shrine in their abominable idolatry. Molech also was an idol; he was a god of the Ammonites. The word Molech signifies a king. To this most cruel idol human sacrifices were made, and even the children of Israel caused their sons and daughters to pass through the fire in him. This cruel, inhuman and unnatural service was not authorized by the Lord; for as we are told in our text, it had never come into the mind of God to command any such abomination, but he had forbidden it on pain of death. – See Deut. xii. 29-32; xv. 10; 2 Kings xvi. 3; xxi. 6; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; xxxiii. 6. Such revolting homage as the worship of Molech, causing children to be burnt upon his altar, can only be accounted for on the ground of the deep and dark depravity of mankind; in such cruel devotion only the enmity of the carnal mind against God can show any inducement. The propensity of the carnal mind to sin against God knows neither limit nor bounds. Yet Israel, the chosen people of God, favored above all other nations of the earth, in their carnal state and condition were prone to idolatry and will-worship as the sparks fly upward. What could induce them to sacrifice their children to Molech, except to openly rebel against God, who had so strictly forbidden it.

“The valley of Hinnom, or of the son of Hinnom, is called Tophet; it is a small valley on the southeast of Jerusalem, at the foot of Mount Zion, where the Canaanites, and afterwards the Israelites, sacrificed their children to the idol Molech, by making them pass through the fire, or by burning them.” – Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, page 226.

These abominations were not practiced privately and in obscure places, but were at times popular in Jerusalem, and the temple of the Lord was desecrated, and altars to Molech were even set up, and these abominations were practiced in the holy consecrated temple in Jerusalem. Is it strange then that the wrath of God was manifested against the idolatrous people by sword, famine and pestilence, and by delivering them into the hands of their enemies? It truly seems more amazing that our long-suffering God did not banish them forever. How truly it is because he is God and changes not that the sons of Jacob are not utterly consumed. Yet in wrath he remembered mercy. In visiting the sins of Judah and Israel with the rod, and their idolatry with the stripes, he did not forget his covenant with Abraham, nor fail to verify his promise to Isaac and Jacob.

The admonition of our subject to the people of God to beware of rebellion and idolatry should not be overlooked nor forgotten by the saints of the gospel dispensation, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.” &c. – Rom. xv. 4. The name of the place of the captivity of the carnal Israelites was Babylon, which name signifies confusion, and we are told “They shall be ashamed and confounded, all of them; they shall go to confusion together that are maker of idols.” – Isa. xlv. 16. And departure from the true God, and reliance for salvation on the works of men's hands, is idolatry, and will assuredly subject the transgressors to Babylonish confusion; from

which may God in grace mercy preserve us, for his holy name's sake.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 14.
July 15, 1881.

JEREMIAH 48:10

“Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.”

Jeremiah was the messenger of the Lord, sent with many fearful predictions of wrath upon the carnal and idolatrous Israelites, and also upon the nations round about them. In the connection of our text he delivers a message from the Lord against Moab, because Moab had trusted in his works, treasures, etc. As the Moabites were always adversaries to Israel, so those of subsequent ages who, like Moab, trust in their own works, treasures, means and instruments, are the adversaries of the spiritual tribes of our Lord, who contend that salvation is of the Lord alone.

These curses denounced, in our text, against those who do the work of the Lord deceitfully, and him that keepeth back his sword from blood, seem to have a special reference to the execution of the judgments of the Lord against Moab. We have an illustration in the account recorded of Balak, king of Moab, when he sent for Balaam to come and curse Israel for him, hoping that thereby he and his forces might be able to drive the Israelites out of the land. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness, and being allured by the princely gifts which Balak proposed to bestow, and the great honors to which he was to exalt him, although solemnly pledged to utter only the words of the Lord, did nevertheless consult deceitfully with Balak to ensnare the Israelites, by laying a stumbling-block to cause them to sin. He did the work of the Lord deceitfully, for while acting as a prophet of the Lord, and charged by the angel of the Lord (see Numbers 25:26, etc.) he consulted with Balak to lay a stumbling-block to cause Israel to sin. Balaam’s love for the wages of unrighteousness

undoubtedly induced him to do the work of the Lord deceitfully.

Jeremiah may have uttered the words of our text in justification of his own faithfulness in declaring the word of the Lord, and in showing the fearful responsibility resting on him, and on all who are called to proclaim the judgments of the Lord to Zion, or what God hath spoken of impending wrath which shall consume the adversaries of his cause and people.

We have a striking illustration of doing the work of the Lord deceitfully in the case of Saul, when he was sent to destroy Amalek. He was commanded to utterly destroy old and young, men and beasts. He had no discretionary power, for it was the work of the Lord; but instead of strictly obeying the word, he ventured to substitute his own judgment, and spared Agag, the king, and the best of the sheep and oxen, and then reported to Samuel that he had obeyed the commandment of the Lord. But Samuel replied, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul had a very pious and plausible excuse; he said, 'Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal." But Samuel did not regard even this pious disposition of Saul and the people to make wholesale sacrifices to the Lord as a valid excuse, for he said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

We have many examples recorded of doing the work of the Lord deceitfully, which are written for our admonition, and to which we shall do well if we take heed, such as making clear the outside of the dish, the whitening of sepulchres, the straining at gnats, the drawing nigh unto the Lord with our lips, the tithing of mint and the making void of the law of God by our traditions, and the teaching for doctrines the commandments of men; but to all such deceitful workers how terrible are the words, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully."

What multitudes are at this very day professing to be the ministers of God, interpreters of the will of God to men, who, instead of preaching peace on earth and good will to men, are appealing to the most violent passions of their fellowmen, and with all their ability fanning the flame of discord, war and carnage. Rivers of human blood have marked the history of these deceitful workers from the days of Cain to the present hour. This very class has caused more bloodshed on the earth by their deceit and hypocrisy than has ever been shed from all other causes since the world began, yet they pretend to be doing the work of the Lord. At one time we find this deceitful clan engaged in getting up their union prayer meetings simultaneously throughout the land, all loving, melted in sympathy for the poor Hottentots, or the barefooted Indians of some foreign desert, and promising to usher in a glorious millennium in a very short time. Anon we hear them praying for war to the knife, and the knife to the hilt. They are a praying people, and have been famous for their long prayers in public places for ages past. But to detect the deceitful manner of their prayers, let their prayers be compared with the instructions given to the disciples by their Lord and Master: "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they maybe seen of men." "Be not ye therefore like unto them: for

your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread: and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," etc. To this instruction our Lord has added: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:5, 9-15) Again: "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." (Luke 11:4) "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you." (Luke 6:27,28) There are very many lessons of prayer of this kind taught by the Savior to his disciples, but in no instance has he instructed them to pray for fire to destroy their enemies, or for God to help us to take vengeance on our supposed or real foes; nor are we at liberty to ask God to forgive our sins, only as he has made us willing to forgive all who have trespassed against us. Let those who profess to be doing the work of the Lord, in praying or in preaching, or in any other way, be tried by the words of him who is the supreme Judge of quick and dead, and from whose decisions there is no appeal, and mark what multitudes are under the curse, as they are manifestly doing the work of the Lord deceitfully.

"And cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." In the war which God instituted between Moab and Israel we have figuratively presented the conflict which is now raging between antichrist and the spiritual Israelites. In the type the warfare was carnal, but in the Christian warfare no carnal weapons are allowed to be used. Moab, as we have shown, as well as all the other tribes and nations which were hostile to Israel, were figurative of the various organized powers of earth and hell, against which the great Captain of our

salvation leads forth the soldiers of the cross. Those who were in the type were, like Saul and David, to use carnal weapons, and forbidden to keep back their swords from blood, where God commanded them to shed blood, were, as we understand the types, to teach us that in our spiritual conflicts we are to make no compromise with error, no treaty with the man of sin, to give neither aid nor comfort to those who are hostile to the spirit or government of the King of Zion. It certainly cannot be construed to mean that as men in the flesh we are to indulge in hatred, wrath or vengeance against them, or to in the least injure them in their persons, property or reputation, for that would conflict with the lesson taught in the preceding part of our text. For we war not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, and against the rulers of the darkness of this world. Christ has said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight," etc. But as his kingdom is spiritual, so our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. But still, as in the type, the war was to be uncompromising and earnest, so also in the antitype the soldiers of Jesus are to fight valiantly and constantly until they are honorably discharged from the conflict; then, like the valiant Paul, they may say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," etc. In applying the language of our text: "Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood," we understand those who professing to be the soldiers of Jesus, who from cowardice, or from any wicked affinity with the enemy, shall hesitate to contend earnestly for the faith, the truth, the order, the ordinances or the discipline of the gospel, shall thereby forfeit the fellowship of the saints. As they that were cursed in Israel were separated and put away from the congregation of the Lord, so those who will sympathize with the enemy, or countenance their errors, are guilty of keeping back their sword from blood, in the spiritual application of the

text. Saul was not the only Israelite who kept back his sword from blood, in sparing Agag, and the sheep and oxen, which the Lord commanded him to destroy with his sword. Nor are we permitted to believe the cases are few or far between in christian profession wherein faithless soldiers are intermingled with those who “are called, and chosen, and faithful.” Saul was a carnal man, his sword was a carnal weapon, an instrument for inflicting injury and death. The true soldier of Jesus is spiritual, and his sword is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; it is not an instrument of cruelty, in a literal point of view, but it is nevertheless “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” What then required the carnal Israelite to utterly destroy their adversaries with the edge of the sword, must signify that the spiritual Israelite is to demolish every stronghold of the enemies of the truth by the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With this spiritual weapon no personal injury can be inflicted upon our fellow-men, while we smite offensively and defensively all who dare oppose the truth of God, and utterly cut off from our communion and fellowship all who fail to pronounce the gospel Shibboleth.

Perhaps in all ages of the christian dispensation there have been some connected with the church who have kept back their sword from blood, in the sense of our text, by indulging in a false sympathy for error itself, or for those who hold and plead for error, and they not only keep back their sword, if they ever had the sword of the Spirit, but also do all in their power to deter the more valiant soldiers of the cross from dashing Babylon’s little ones against the stones. But they are accursed; that is, they are denounced in their cowardly and treasonable course by the declarations of the word of truth. The word of the Lord is: “Put yourselves in array against

Babylon round about: all ye that bend the bow, shoot at her, spare no arrows; for she hath sinned against the Lord.” (Jeremiah 50:14)

Middletown, N.Y.,
October 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 272 – 277

JEREMIAH 50,51; REVELATION 17

(Reply to Sister Leonard)

We presume it is not expected that we should examine and compare all that is contained in these very lengthy chapters of Jeremiah, with what is contained in the portion of Revelation referred to, but simply and briefly reply to the inquiry in regard to their connection. What was prophesied by Jeremiah was in reference to ancient Babylon literally, and his fearful predictions were fulfilled to the letter in the destruction of that magnificent city, the slaying of her king and his nobles by the Medes and Persians, and the utter overthrow of the imperial government.

The destruction of Mystery, Babylon, recorded in Revelation 17. is a presentation, in highly figurative language, of the wrath and vengeance of God, which is held in store, and soon to be poured out upon antichrist.

Ancient Babylon, in her rise, progress, wickedness and final overthrow, was unquestionably designed as a type of the organized powers of the man of sin, the son of perdition, that should be arrayed against the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the gospel dispensation. Hence the name Babylon is applied in Revelation to what is elsewhere in the New Testament called “That Wicked,” “whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish.” (II Thess. 2:8-10) The very name Babylon signifies confusion, and is probably derived from the

circumstance of God's confusing the language of those enterprising, industrious, hard-working parties who had united their efforts to build a tower whose top should reach to heaven. In this grand enterprise three prominent objects were intended to be secured: First, to open a common thoroughfare from earth to heaven, without the humiliating necessity of being saved by grace. Second, to defeat the wisdom of God, should he again attempt to deluge the earth; and last, but not least, to erect a lasting monument of the capability, enterprise and zeal of men. But in a way quite unbooked for by them, God confounded their language and defeated their stupendous project. The tower lacked just about as much of reaching to heaven as all the inventions and works of men are doomed to fall short of saving sinners independently of the grace of God. It has always been the pride of antichrist in all her forms and organizations to boast of her own exploits, of what she has done, means to do, and of her free agency in opening avenues to heaven. Thus the king of Babylon exulted in the palace, of his kingdom: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" But, "While the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, The kingdom is departed from thee." (Daniel 4:30,31) In the vain and wicked imaginations of his heart he had said, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High." (Isaiah 14:13,14) But the Lord of hosts has said he would rise up against Babylon, and sweep it with the besom of destruction.

In all these particulars it is easy to trace the spirit, the pride, the vain and lofty imaginations of antichrist in every age. From this ancient and widely renowned city, with its broad

and towering walls, its gates of brass and mighty fortifications, in its oppression of Israelitish captives, its invasion of Jerusalem, its desecration of consecrated vessels of the Lord, its widespread dominion and its provinces, all prefigured "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (Rev. 17:18) But in the parallels presented by Jeremiah and John, in the chapters before us, the destruction of the typical and the antitypical Babylons, are more particularly described, and show the retributive vengeance of God in their awful doom. And as at the time of the destruction of the former, God called his captives out of the former Babylon, so, in connection with the final destruction of Mystery, Babylon, John heard a voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." From which we infer that there are some of the Lord's captive children now in Babylon and she is speedily to be destroyed; God now commands them to come out of her.

Middletown, N.Y.,
March 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 163 - 165

THE JEWISH PRIESTHOOD.

BROTHER BEEBE: – Please give your views on Hebrews v. 1, 2. “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for he himself also is compassed with infirmity.”

J. A. BRISTOW.
Winnsborough, Texas, Dec., 1880.

REPLY. – The inspired writer has compared and contrasted the priesthood of the Old Testament, which was after the law of a carnal commandment, with that of our Lord Jesus Christ which is after the power of an endless life, and after the order of Melchisedec. In the fourth chapter, and immediately preceding our text, it is said, “Seeing then that we have a High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” While the priests of the former dispensation were taken from among men, who like all other men had infirmities and sins of their own, for which they were first to make offerings according to the law which they were under, before they were allowed to make for the sins of others; it was not so with our great High Priest, for although in the flesh of his members, he was tempted in points as they are, and he knows the feelings of their infirmities, and knows how to succor them that are tempted, yet he was himself personally without sin, and had no occasion to make offerings only for the sins of his people. He, the immaculate Son of God, is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens.

The high priests of the old covenant were taken from among men, and ordained, or inducted into that office by an ordinance in the Levitical law, and being thus ordained and duly qualified for the position, could sympathize with the ignorant and such as were out of the way, being themselves men in the flesh, and required the same ceremonial cleansing from their sins as did those for whom they officiated. Thus we see that the law, with all its handwriting of ordinances, had only a shadow of good things to come, and not being the very image of the things which they pointed to, could never with those sacrifices make the comers thereto perfect. For neither the law itself, nor that priesthood which was under it, could make anything perfect. But our great High Priest who has now passed into the heavens, has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. He has opened the way whereby those who are of his holy priesthood are admonished to come boldly unto the throne of grace, that they may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 5.
March 1, 1881

JOB XV. 15.

BROTHER E. Moreland, of Tennessee, desires our views on Job xv. 15, viz: "Behold he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight." However correct or incorrect the declaration of this text may be, we certainly are not warranted to receive the testimony as a part of divine revelation, as that which is written by direct inspiration of God. The words were spoken by Eliphaz the Temanite, and addressed to Job, among other words which were not approved by God; for the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." – Job xlii. 7. Still, although Eliphaz and his two friends were uninspired, and evidently mistook the case of Job, we must regard much of what they said as truth, because of its harmony with the inspired word. When Eliphaz told Job that an acquaintance with God would enable him to lay up the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brook, he spoke not according to the general experience of those who know the Lord, for they are generally poor and lay up but very little gold; but in this text, the declaration that God putteth no trust in his saints is in perfect harmony with every expression of divine revelation which God has been pleased to make of himself. It is the privilege of all his saints to trust in God, and they shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved; but we cannot conceive that God puts his trust in his saints; he relies alone upon himself, and is all sufficient, independent, and supports all things.

That the heavens are not clean in his sight depends on what heavens are alluded to. If God's throne be intended, it is clean, and from it proceeds a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. – Rev. xxii. 1. The church viewed in her connection with Christ, washed in his blood, is clean, and

God will behold no spot in her. But if the declaration be applied to the heavens which are reserved to fire, which are to pass away, the words are true. Within the new heavens and the new earth dwelleth righteousness.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
May 1, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 552 – 553

JOB 19:25-27

At the request of Mrs. Elizabeth King, only daughter of the late Mrs. Ruth Hoyt, whose obituary was published in the preceding number of this paper, we publish our views on the following portion of the scriptures. We had failed to learn that the deceased had expressed a desire that it should be preached from until after her funeral. The deceased had been very much exercised in her mind some years ago, and it was believed by those who conversed with her that she had passed from death unto life. The interest manifested by her in this text strengthens the hope that she felt in her declining hours the blissful assurance of hope in the living Redeemer.

"For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me (Job 19:25-27)."

The book of Job is supposed to have been written by Moses, and is regarded as a most sublime and sacred poem, parabolically presenting the church of God in the person of Job, in all her various phases in which her patience and integrity are subjected to the severest tests, and the *end of the Lord,* or design and purpose of God, in suffering Satan to afflict his chosen ones, is made to appear. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy (James 5:11)." Like all other parts of the holy scriptures, this book of Job was written by inspiration of God; for as the inspired truth of God, it is referred to and recognized by prophets and apostles. That there was a man that dwelt in the land of Uz, whose name

was Job, is beyond all contradiction, true; for God himself declares it; and that all that is written of him in this book is strictly true we have no doubt. But while such are our firm convictions, we still believe that like David and others, what was written of Job was designed to allegorically apply to the church and the people of God. As his name signifies *patience,* it is applicable not only to him as an individual, but is applicable to the patience of all the people of God. As Job's patience was sorely tried by afflictions, bereavements, temptations, physical and mental sufferings; by disappointment in those whom he had once regarded as his friends and confidential advisers, and by cruel persecutions, so also have all the people of God been tried in all ages. "A poor and afflicted people, who trust in the name of the Lord." "For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution."

Satan thought, and many of his ministers have fallen into the same error, that Job was what in modem times is called an *Arminian;* that he served God for pay, and from selfish motives, and not from the power and vitality of the love of God implanted in his heart; and hence his challenge, "Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face (Job 1:9-11)."

How many such dialogues as are described in this connection have transpired in the experience of the children of God, by the Spirit of the Lord in the saints, and the spirit of Satan in the flesh. How keenly do the saints of God from time to time writhe with pain from the envenomed suggestions of the Devil, suggesting to them that their religion is only natural

and selfish, and that their devotion and obedience to God springs not from the power of an endless life, but from the law of a carnal commandment. Now *the end of the Lord,* that is, the purpose of God in all the trials and afflictions of his people is to prove the power of his sustaining grace, by the trial of their faith, and patience, and to show beyond all controversy that their righteousness is of the Lord; and that their faith, patience, submission, and hope are fruits, not of their carnal nature reformed, but of his own Spirit implanted in them.

Now carefully review the whole experience of Job, and see if we do not find in it portrayed the general experience of all the children of God. Plunged in deep distress, stripped of his worldly subsistence, bereaved of his children, tortured with distressing loathsome biles; surrounded with miserable comforters who instead of condoling sympathy and words of comfort, reproach and taunt him; while he vainly appeals to them for pity; and to make his misery complete, the presence of his God is withdrawn, and in bitterness of spirit, he cries out, "O that I knew where I might find him." Under all this weight of sorrow and distress, his faith in God shines out from his darkness like the bow of divine assurance painted in living colors on the lowering cloud; or as the rising sun in his radiant strength dissipating the lowering shades of unbelief. Faith, triumphant over fear, shouts the victory; "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Although a sinner needing redemption; and without the least power of my own to make myself just with God, (see Job 9:1) God has graciously provided for me a "Days Man," one who can lay his hand on both, who can secure all the honor of the throne of God; magnify and honor the divine law which I have transgressed; meet and cancel every demand of God's eternal justice, and yet deliver me from death; save me from hell; clothe me with the righteousness of God; and freely, effectually and forever justify me through the redemption that is in him.

Such a Redeemer was seen clearly by the faith of the Son of God as exemplified in Job, fifteen hundred and twenty years before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to our guilty world. This is the cheering language of faith; living faith, tried faith, and faith that overcometh the world. Dark gloomy clouds may gather thickly around; tempests may spread their mightiest storms, and bellowing thunders shake the arched skies; but the undaunted faith of God's elect will surely reassert its conquering power, and bear its humble possessor safely through the final "wreck of matter and the crash of worlds." Esteemed friends, as in the case of Job, may withhold their tender sympathy in the time of our severest trials, and even load us with their cruel reproach; but as the lightning's brilliant flash upon surrounding darkness, our faith will disclose to us the cheering knowledge that "Our Redeemer liveth." Through the dim vista of more than fifteen centuries intervening between the day of Job and the incarnation of the Son of God, like Abraham at a still more distant standpoint, he saw the day, rejoiced in it and was glad. "He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." This testimony of Christ was, and is, the Spirit of prophecy. It was the Spirit of Christ in Job, and in the prophets that in them did testify of his coming, of his sufferings, and of the glory that should follow. So far as the first advent of the Redeemer is expressed in our text, it was fulfilled when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; from the assurance expressed by Job, that he should see him, and his eyes should behold him in the latter day; we understand him to be speaking of the second coming of the Son of God, as it is testified by Paul, "And unto them that look for him, shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." When he shall come to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day.

This application of the prediction seems in harmony with the assurance of the faith of Job, that he should personally see

him, and his eyes behold him, and in his flesh; even after his flesh should be destroyed by worms, and his reins consumed within him. This seems to be in substance what Paul expressed in Philippians 3:10, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,” etc.

As the faith of all the saints looks for a blessed resurrection, and happy immortality, so Job, after conceding the weakness and mortality of his flesh, and all his fleshly powers, admitting that, my property may perish, my children die, my earthly joys may all be blasted, and my skin and my body become food for greedy worms, and my reins, or all my vital fleshly powers, possessions, affections and interests must fail, and decompose in the grave; this, even this, shall not disturb the purpose of God, or hinder the fulfillment of his promises. “I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.” This faith was the same in the psalmist, “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness. I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness (Psalm 17:15).” The deep afflictions through which Job was passing were breaking down his mortal powers and consuming his life, and wearisome nights were appointed to him; still, like the psalmist, he could say, “My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.” Although to the grave I bow down my head, and yield my flesh and say unto corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister; yet with the perfect assurance that I have a living Redeemer who shall deliver me from death and bring me forth at last in triumph from the grave.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 433 - 437

JOEL II. 16.

“Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.”

The first part of the chapter in which this text is found, appears to be addressed more particularly to the Jews as a nation, yet it is evident that the text before us has a direct application to Christ and the church, and that the whole chapter has them in view, in its ultimate application. The closing up of the chapter is language which embraces in itself the glory and power of the kingdom of Christ. In the first verse of the chapter it is said, “Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain, let all the inhabitants of the earth tremble, for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand.” We understand the day of the Lord, which is here introduced, to be the same day which is mentioned in the thirty-first verse, and is there called the great and terrible day of the Lord. This subject is clearly explained by our Lord in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, and in the second chapter of the Acts of the apostles; Peter has removed all doubts and successful disputes upon the point. On the day of Pentecost, when the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues so that every man heard them in their own language wherein they were born, some were amazed, and inquired what those things meant; others mockingly said, These men (the apostles) are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said unto them, These men are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, and then quotes the very language which is found in the close of the chapter, in which our text is contained. It is not possible therefore to miss the application, unless Peter erred in applying it where he did, and this we

know was not the case. The expression in the last clause of the sixteenth verse, is that which the Holy Ghost chose as a part of the language through which to describe the setting up of the gospel kingdom on the earth in union with Christ its King. With these invulnerable bulwarks around this idea, we hesitate not to apply the text directly to Christ and the church. The terms bridegroom and bride, when used in the Bible, very generally apply to this union. We learn from the Bible that the most solemn, binding and endearing of all human ties, those of the bridegroom and bride, are borrowed from and represent the union of Christ and the church, and if we inquire why Ishmael was not an heir with Isaac, we shall discover that one very important reason was, that he was not a son of the bride, and had no vital relationship with her. God is not the author of confusion and discord, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. All the amalgamation and means of men can never add anything to the body of Christ, for nothing can be added to it, which was not originally in it. If we refer to our first parents after the flesh, for a figurative illustration upon this point, we shall there discover that Eve was in Adam, until she was developed as his bride. We should particularly note the fact that the bridegroom was not made for the bride, but the bride was made for the bridegroom. In relation to Christ and the church in their vital relationship they are co-equal, although the development of the bride was subsequently to her vital existence in him. In relation to this union, and the manifestation of it, God was pleased to establish the titles Bridegroom and Bride, and apply them to the Head, and the body, which is the church, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Our text has to do with this Head and body, in life and death, in doctrine, ordinances and gospel, or church organization. The time was appointed by the eternal Father for this manifested union, and his command in the text is, “Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.” Christ Jesus, the Lord and Mediator of the new covenant, had long been

made manifest to the faithful, through representations, types and shadows, but all these types and shadows declared that their substance, that which is perfect, had not yet come. Jesus was represented by the spotless lamb offered by Abel. Abel is dead, yet in that offering he now speaks. The law was a school-master. At the time appointed of God, Jesus Christ came into the world to swallow up types and shadows in himself, and to remove the ceremonies which pointed to him, to fulfill all that had been written of him, and that had been represented in offerings and ceremonies. “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.” Who was under the law? The bride, the Lamb’s wife. Why then was not the law executed upon her, and she consigned to everlasting woe? She has a Mediator who appears as her husband, and Paul said, The law knoweth not a woman which hath an husband, and what the Scriptures before us point to, is the full manifestation that Christ is the Husband, or Bridegroom of the church, which is composed not of Jews only, but of Gentiles also; and God hath visited the Gentiles to take out from among them a people for his name. The church is not composed of all of either, but of a people out of both, and Jesus appears in the flesh between the two; in the end of the Jewish world or economy, and in the beginning of the christian, when the Gentiles are called and the church is gathered under the latter. “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.” That consolidated lady is the election of grace, and figuratively speaking is the bone of Christ’s bone, and the flesh of his flesh. We here find a bride which was in Christ before the world began. Having thus found a bridegroom and bride, we will attempt to follow them in their nuptials and fellowship. David in presenting in the most clear and beautiful manner, the setting up of the gospel kingdom in the earth, and in

presenting Christ, his doctrine and ordinances, as taught by the apostles, and his manifested union with the church as the Bridegroom, breaks forth in strains almost seraphic, thus, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth thy handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them he has set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race." Here the most stupendous, beautiful and amazing glory ever seen by the natural eye, is brought forward as a comparison of the glory of Christ in the church, in their union as bridegroom and bride. The heavens with their constellations, which declare the wisdom, power and glory of the creating God, are referred to, and they are but feeble figures, to portray the glory of God, in the church, through Christ Jesus our Lord. Age after age rolls on, and in all the multitude of planets, sun, moon and stars, no jargon nor failure occurs. Each one travels onward in its allotted path, and owns and proclaims the sovereign hand of God, which not only created them, but which also bears them up, in their onward march, and in the performance of the affairs for which they were severally created. The life and light of patriarchs, prophets, apostles and all christians, dwells in Christ the Sun of righteousness. What power in earth or hell, can retard the march of the sun, or frustrate the office work of his glory, or who, or what can resist the effectual and all-powerful action of his rays? He rises in the east to perform the office of the day, and no earthly power can stop him. Until man can do this, let him not think that he can master or resist Christ, the sun's maker; for Jesus is no less powerful in one thing than he is in all things. The sun is brought forward as the strongest figure in the creation of God, by which to represent the glory and power of Christ in the church, as her never-failing fountain of light and warmth to every branch

and member thereof. As all the smaller lights and planets are dependent for their light on the sun, so is all the church dependent on Christ, who as a bridegroom cometh out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. “Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber.” Here we must receive the word chamber in a figurative sense, and consider it in that sense in which the spirit of inspiration has used it. We are not satisfied from the Scriptures, that it is applied to any one act of Christ, or that he should here be separated from the entire race of his Mediatorial goings forth, but rather a place of rest from his goings forth of old, and his work under the law, and that place of rest from whence he comes forth to preside manifestly as Head in the church; for we are not only told of the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we are also informed as to the consummation of it. “To the intent that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” To what then does this manifold wisdom and purpose refer? To the salvation of the church, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, which was not known in other ages, that the Gentiles should be made fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his power in Christ, by the gospel; but when Christ came this truth was made manifest, and he took the church out from among both Jews and Gentiles and into a manifested union with himself. But when was the appointed time for this wedding, as our Lord in one of his parables calls it? The time came on the death of the law, the first husband, and then Christ “the Bridegroom went forth of his chamber,” and we are now introduced to the doctrine of Christ, and the ordinances of the christian, or gospel church. The Bridegroom not only came in accordance with the purpose and covenant of God, but in that purpose and covenant was embraced the appointed way in which he should come, and when and how this manifested union should be consummated. By referring

to the Levitical priesthood, we may, perhaps, find some figurative opening to the chamber, and the Bridegroom in his coming forth of it. “For these Levites, the four chief porters, were in their set office, and were over the chambers and treasuries of the house of God, and they lodged round about the house of God, because the charge was upon them, and the opening thereof every morning pertained to them.” We read also in the gospel, of a porter who opened to Christ. As the priesthood made is changed, there is also of necessity a change of the law, and as Christ is the High Priest over a different house, which has different laws, so are all things pertaining to it different. New laws and new ordinances are instituted, and Christ, or the Bridegroom, comes forth in these, and was preceded by the friend of the Bridegroom, even the porter who opened to him, and Jesus was baptized of John the Baptist, in the river of Jordan, and the Bridegroom established this as an ordinance through which believers pass into the visible church here below. We deem the conclusion tenable that this chamber has some reference to that doctrine, and those ordinances in which Christ and the church came together in union and fellowship, as Bridegroom and bride. We believe also that the parable of the ten virgins has an application here. “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps and went forth to meet the Bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five of them were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.” In the first place then, what is this parable applied to, and upon what subject was the Savior instructing his disciples? We think he was instructing them in relation to that kingdom which he was about to set up in the world, and as it is a

spiritual kingdom, he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh, and as forms and ceremonies of the Jews was all the foolish virgins possessed, they could not enter in with the bridegroom to the marriage. An open distinction is now made between law and grace, between Moses and Christ, and none need say now, We have Abraham for our father, for Moses is dead and the fathers are fallen asleep. The time also when the bridegroom came, favors this position also. The cry was at midnight. The legal dispensation is now at an end, and the gospel day is dawning. Midnight closes up the old day, and brings in a new one, and this midnight was the close of the Jewish economy, and the introduction of the christian. In what way then does the bride meet, or go, into the marriage with the bridegroom? Those who do go in with Christ are regenerated persons, born of God, born of the Spirit and water, and have Christ within (the light) the hope of glory. John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. He was the messenger who was sent before the Messenger of the covenant, to prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. Believers came to him and were baptized, and this ordinance was established as a standing one for all time to come in the church of God, which is the ground and pillar of truth. While it admits all into the visible church who submit to it upon a profession of their faith in Christ, it shuts out all who do not, and the Pharisees rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized of John. Hence it appears evident to us that the chamber of which the Bridegroom went forth has an important connection, and sustains a close relation, to the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel of Christ. There is a figure found in Nehemiah, which seems to have a bearing upon this point, said Nehemiah, “And I came to Jerusalem, and understood the evil that Eliashib did for Tobiah, in preparing him a chamber in the courts of the house of God. And it grieved me sore:

therefore I cast forth all the household stuff of Tobiah out of the chamber. Then I commanded, and they cleansed the chambers; and thither brought I again the vessels of the house of God, with the meat offering and the frankincense." Now what is it which separates all the false religious combinations in the world, from the true church in her worship? It is their household stuff, their false doctrine, false ordinances and organizations. If Tobiah is rejected, and not allowed to assist in building the wall, his next effort is to get the chamber of the house furnished with his stuff. But it is the duty of the servants of the Lord to cast it forth into the world from whence it came, and where it belongs. Perhaps David had his eye upon this subject when he said, "Their land brought forth frogs in abundance in the chambers of their kings." If these frogs, as in other places, represent those unclean spirits which have gone forth into all the earth, we cannot fail to discover the force of its application. They were not brought forth in the chamber of which the bridegroom went forth, but in the chambers of their kings. There never was a scarcity of them, and at this time there is such an abundance of them that they are leaping from swamp to swamp, and from one mud hole to another, and find all the markets already clogged.

But to return to the guest-chamber. It is an upper room, furnished with the vessels and lights, and is where Jesus eats the passover with his disciples. In relation to the chamber of which Christ went forth, we do not wish to confine the expression exclusively to the ordinances and order of the house; but would embrace in a summary manner, his mediatorial work, life, death, resurrection and ascension, and appearing from the holy of holies, and dwelling in his church. But as the expression occurs in the text, there appears to be more particular reference to the manifested union of Christ and the church in gospel order, and the fellowship and enjoyment therein. He went forth and established the things

referred to, and they must remain for all time to come, as the established laws and order of the church and her government. When the High Priest under the law had gone into the most holy place, and finished the atonement, he then came out and appeared to the people, and the blessings of that typical atonement were then enjoyed. Christ has not entered into the holy place made with hands, but into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for the church, for he entered there by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and from thence he appears to her. "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." "Let the Bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet." They both went forth at the same time. The apostle has told us that the bride or church is the body of Christ. We have already referred to Adam and Eve, as a figure upon this point. When Adam was formed, Eve was in him, but she was not yet made manifest in her individual person. And it was not the form of a marriage ceremony which constituted their relationship. Their relationship was vital, and consisted in their one life, and it is not the outward act of the marriage of Christ and the church which constitutes their vital union; but their marriage is an acknowledgment and declaration of relationship which existed before time began. This bride was made for the Bridegroom, and she is destined to dwell for a time upon the earth as a bride, to manifest and shew forth the praises of her Lord. She is commanded forth out of her closet, which appears to be a secret place. Yes, she is called out, "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance." Here is not only a call or command to her which carries power with it, but the language describes the place where she is. She is in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs. Her life is hid with Christ in God, and in this marriage there is a manifestation of it. But how came she in the clefts of the

rock, and in the secret places of the stairs? But even had there been a rock, and no clefts or secret places in it, there would have been no place of refuge and safety in it for the dove, the church. God laid the rock, and made the clefts and secret places of the stairs, and put the church therein, and covered her with his hand while his glory passed by; for he had declared that no man should see his face and live; and being thus secured in Christ, she can talk face to face with God and live. "And it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in the cleft of a rock, and will cover thee with my hand, while I pass by." The bride is not commanded to come out of Christ, neither do we understand this rock to be the closet out of which she goes; but it is the place from whence her countenance is seen, and her voice is heard, and she is brought out of the secret places of the stairs, so far that it is made manifest that she is an inhabitant of the rock. The countenance is to be seen, and not covered with the veil. She is to be seen by her husband, not through the veiled drapery of the law, but with open face she beholds the glory of the Lord, and is changed from the image, or glory of the law, into the image and glory of Christ, which bursts from him in floods of ravishing glory. Her countenance is comely: it is like the countenance of the Bridegroom, for she is changed from image to image, into the same glory. And she is now told that the law holds no more dominion over her; that the law is dead, and she is now to look to Christ, the living Husband, for the law has no more dominion over her than the deceased husband, whose body has mouldered to dust, has over the widow who was once his bride. Her husband is dead, and has passed away, and she is therefore loosed from the law of her husband. "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth." We are thus taught that Christ was made under the law, and remained under it until his death; but having laid down his life in obedience to its demands, and having taken it again,

“He has become the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” He arose from the dead, beyond it, and is no more subject to it. “For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” The church both died and rose in Christ, else what did the apostle mean when he said, “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him?” Christ is emphatically declared to be the life of the church; and when he laid down his life, he laid down hers; and when he took up his life again, he took up hers also, and the church stands identified with Christ in life, death and resurrection, and all believers are exhorted by the apostle to reckon themselves to be dead with Christ, and alive with him. Now, this being the case, the bride is commanded to go forth out of her closet, and to be joined to another husband (as the law is dead to her,) and live and walk with the Bridegroom, in the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel. “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” The Bridegroom has a house prepared where he dwells with his bride, and she with him. He is the builder of his house, which is the church; and he did not commence it without first counting the cost, and without knowing that he is able to finish it. None will ever be able to say in truth, this man began to build a house, but was not able to finish it. The advocates of the free-will system say that Christ made an atonement sufficient for all mankind, and he has done all he can to save them, but free-will and the devil together have proved too powerful for him, and the house is not as large as it otherwise would have been. They acknowledge that the

Scriptures declare that he has all power in heaven and in earth, but somehow or other free agency has gained the ascendency, and the devil is rejoicing over the failure, and Christ is mourning in heaven, because sinners will not be saved. Perhaps it is sin for us to follow the advocates of this system in their consummate ignorance and high-handed blasphemy; we therefore turn from them. The atonement was effectual, and it was perfect in all its propositions for the church; the foundation was designed for the house, and the house for the foundation, and all power in heaven and earth is in the hands of Christ, and is exercised by him in triumph in building this house, which groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord, for an habitation of God through the Spirit. And here the Son presents his bride to the Father without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. And the Father is well pleased with the bride of his Son, for she is the one whom he hath chosen for his Son Jesus Christ. The Son is well pleased with her, for his love to her was such that he laid down his life for her; and she loves him because he first loved her, and hath given himself for her, redeemed her from all iniquity, hath washed and purified her, and brought her into his banqueting-house, and spread his banner of love over her. He illumes her with his charms, and she sees a loveliness in him which she never saw in any other one, and here, in the house of God, Father, Son and bride dwell in heavenly fellowship and sweet delight. But what is this house for, and of what material is it composed? “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ.” But some people think the church is a place to make christians, or regenerate sinners, and to create organizations and institutions; to devise ways and means for the salvation of the world, and thus help the Lord do his work. The work of salvation is already complete, and what remains is the personal manifestation of it, to the saved. And the church of God is for the offering up of spiritual sacrifices acceptable to

God by Jesus Christ. Here the bride offers the praise and gratitude of her heart, and such is the glory and love revealed through Christ unto her, that if she were to hold her peace, the stones would cry out. The whole worship of the church is a continual offering of thanksgiving and praise to God and the Lamb. To them are all the ascriptions of praise. The Bridegroom and bride sometimes commune together, and speak face to face. And what do we hear? The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall sing praise to the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever. Here the Bridegroom and bride dwell and sup together. God in Christ, and Christ in them, and there is a perfection in one, and out of this perfection of beauty hath God shined. The bride says, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels.” Once she could not rejoice, for she was the down-crushed and disconsolate mourner, she was in the dust of the earth, a poor, filthy beggar; but the Lord has taken her from the dust of the earth, and from the dunghill, has clothed her with a change of raiment, seated her among princes, and given her the throne of glory; and now at the King’s right hand sits the queen in the gold of Ophir, and she is to remember her poverty no more, for she is heir of all things. This fills her heart with gratitude to her Lord, and she delights in serving him, for he hath done great things for her, whereof she is glad. She hath neither disposition nor right to usurp authority over her husband, and if she will know anything, she learns of him. She respects his law, rules and government, and would tremble at the thought of instituting laws for him. And while the daughters of Babylon are busily engaged in their ways, and are disregarding the authority and order of Christ, she is seen like the lily among the

thorns, and she has no more fellowship for, nor affinity with them, than the lily has to do with producing the fruit of the thornbush; and men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. The church is not dependent on the world and human means for her support, for she dwells with, and is supported by her husband; and it would be both unchaste and unlawful for her to despise his laws, and look to others for support, while she has a husband who abounds in wealth and love to her. He delights in her: “Let me hear thy voice, for it is sweet.” The high praises of God are in her mouth; she speaks the doctrine of Christ; she tells of his wonderful love and works; she dwells on electing love and comforting grace, and like one of old who had been dumb, when loosed immediately praises God. But what is it to praise God? Is it to tell the world how much she has done for the Lord, and to tell the Lord how much she will do for him? Nothing of this character is found in the theme of the bride. But like the servant of the Lord to whom we have already referred, she praises God and says, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” “To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant.” The voice of the bride is heard in the song of redemption, and in praise of covenant mercy received. The bride is also to let her countenance be seen by the Bridegroom. As has been observed, the veil of the law has been taken from her, and she stands before her Lord with open face. But why is her countenance comely? Because it is Christlike; God predestinated the church to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Christ is in every believer the hope of glory, and where he is in person, his image and Spirit will be made manifest. What is it to be a christian? It is to be like Christ. But Adam, or old nature, is quite unlike him. But the new

man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, is the christian, or that person or image to which the term applies; and he is after the image of him that created him. We have found the “Bridegroom has gone forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet,” and the voice of the Bridegroom, and the voice of the bride have been heard, and the bride is still saying, O come, let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise unto the Rock of our salvation. The Bridegroom and the bride have met and are joined in fellowship in the house of God, and the fellowship of the bride is with the Father, and with the Son, and they dwell together in the unity of the Spirit and bonds of peace, and she delights to walk in the doctrine and ordinances of the gospel, in that pattern in ordinances and order which Christ established by his example, and in this she walks humbly with God, and his presence is her greatest joy. But we cannot enjoy his presence in any ordinances or order which he has not established. Although believers may enjoy the joys of salvation, who have not walked in the ordinances, but there is an additional and peculiar delight and enjoyment in keeping the ordinances as they were delivered to us, which is found in no other paths, hence it is said, in keeping the commands there is great reward. The reward is not for keeping the commands, but in the thing itself; and the delight or reward is in it, and not for it. The person who is hungry delights in eating a good meal, and it is the meal itself which gives the delight, and not the act of his eating, for if the meal were poisonous and sickening it could afford him no delight. The bride is disgusted with all human doctrines and ordinances, for they are of earthly origin, and their glory can never rise above their fountain, and they are also, in reality, in opposition to, and at war with, those ordinances which were established, and that doctrine which embraces him whom her soul loves.

Dear brethren, may we ever be enabled to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, may we stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage. May we ever be enabled to realize that our Maker is our Husband. May we ever abide in the doctrine of Christ; for he that hath the Father, hath the Son. But if any come unto us having not this doctrine, we are forbidden to receive them into our houses (churches), or to bid them Godspeed; for he that biddeth them Godspeed is partaker of their sins.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 97 - 111

JOEL III. 14-17

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel. So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain: then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more."

In the connection of this text, we have a prophecy which was quoted by the apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, and applied to the outpouring of the Spirit on the Jews and Gentiles on that remarkable occasion. See Acts ii. 16-21, compared with Joel ii. 28, 32. From the application made by the inspired apostles of the prophecies of Joel, we are fully authorized to regard them as relating to the present dispensation, and especially relating to things which transpired on and subsequent to that day. The outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh, or on those out of all nations, was to precede what was called by Joel, and also by Peter, "the great and terrible day of the Lord," which day probably had reference to the day wherein God's judgments should be visited upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judea, in the terrible execution of which we have a striking type of the final overthrow of mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and the abominations of the earth. "*For*," says the Lord, by the mouth of Joel, "*Behold, in the days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom*

they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." The valley of Jehoshaphat and the valley of decision, evidently are the same. The valley of Jehoshaphat literally is a deep, narrow glen, which runs from north to south, between the Mount of Olives and Mount Moriah. But as the name Jehoshaphat in the Hebrew signifies the judgment of God, it is probably used in this case symbolically to signify the place of judgment, or where the Lord would execute his judgment on the enemies of his spiritual Jerusalem, and as his judgments are final, allowing no appeal from them, they are consequently decisive, and in our text the place of them is called the valley of decision. It was near Jerusalem, and so may set forth the scriptural idea of the mediatorial throne, in the true and spiritual Jerusalem, where God has set his king upon his holy hill of Zion.

"*Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision.*" These words present to our mind the same that was expressed by our Lord in the parable of the sheep and goats, Matt. xxv. 31-46, "*When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats,*" &c. In the exaltation of our Redeemer of his mediatorial glory, he is crowned with a royal diadem, that he should given eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him. The place of his throne is upon his holy hill of Zion. The valley of Jehoshaphat, or of decision, is at the base of Mount Zion, and may signify not only the exaltation of Christ in his government, but the humbling of the nations before him. All things are put under him. (1 Cor. xv. 27.) The multitudes are in the valley, but Christ is exalted, and sits upon the throne of his power. The lamb stands upon stands upon Mount Zion.

"*For the day of the Lord is near,*" &c. The day in which he should display his power in judgment, in decision, and in separating between the precious and the vile. When the temple worship should be abolished, the building thrown down, and the old Jerusalem should be destroyed; when he whose voice once shook the earth, should also shake the heavens, and in which the things that can be shaken should be removed, as things that are made, and the things that cannot be shaken should remain. (Heb. xii. 27.) The day of the Lord, in which the saints should receive a kingdom that cannot be moved, and have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. In this valley of decision we may contemplate all the nations of the earth, including all the children of men of all the tribes and kindreds of mankind before the throne and power of the exalted Son of God, to be separated the one from the others, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. No place but the valley of Jehoshaphat, or of God's judgment, will answer the purpose. The Lord alone knows them that are his, and he therefore alone is competent to judge and make the decision, by calling his own sheep by name, and leading them out. This discrimination is final and decisive, and it is made in the judgment of the Lord, in the valley of decision.

"*The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining,*" &c. The old heavens and earth with their luminaries should pass away, their elements should be dissolved, they should be rolled together as a scroll, and like a vesture they should be laid aside. But the Lord maketh all things new. The new heavens and the new earth appears, wherein dwelleth righteousness, or wherein Christ, who is our righteousness, dwelleth. The Lord God himself, and the Lamb, are the light of this new covenant dispensation. All the legal lights are put out. This holy city, new Jerusalem, which comes down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, needs not the sun for a light by day, for there

shall be no night there. The law and the prophets which were until John, they have attained their designs, and passed away with the receding heavens and earth; the types and shadows no longer aid the vision of the saints. The Lord God is the light, and in his light the saints have light. The perfect day is ushered in, for the Day Spring from on high hath visited us. The people which sat in darkness have seen a great light, and to them that dwelt in the shadow of death a light has sprung up. The Judge descends from heaven, the throne is set, power is given him over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. Judgment proceeds; he calleth his own sheep by name. The dead hear the voice of the Son of God and live. His sheep hear his voice; he knows them, and they follow him, because he gives to them eternal life; and this is life eternal, that they know the true God, and Jesus Christ our Lord. His own sheep are put forth, and he goeth before them, and they follow him. Thus the decision is made, and the line is drawn with infallible accuracy between the precious and the vile.

"*And the Lord shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem,*" &c. Zion was the city of David, and the place of his royal palace in Jerusalem, and denotes to us the place of the mediatorial throne of the king of righteousness. His voice, which once shook the earth, shall again not only shake the earth, but also heaven, and effect the removing of everything that can be shaken may remain in the kingdom which he came to set up and preside over. His voice is figuratively presented in many parts of Scriptures in a variety of modulations. When on Sinai he spake in trumpet tones, and the thunder of his voice shook the mountain; and the mountains skipped like rams, and the hills like lambs. He spake tot he prophet Elijah in a still small voice, or sound. And in a voice familiar to all his flock, he calls his own sheep by name, and they know his voice, and they follow him. The hour cometh, and now is, in which the dead shall hear his

voice, and they that hear shall live. His voice has power to allay the fury of the tempest, and allay the raging tumult of the sea. With his voice he speaks the word, and it stands fast; he commands, and it is done. And the hour shall come in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life eternal, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation. But in our text it is said that he shall roar out of Zion. This figurative term seems to agree with the account given by John, Rev. i. 15, "*And his voice as the sound of many waters.*" Also Rev. x. 3, "*And cried with a loud voice as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.*" As the multitudes, nations and tongues of the universe are figuratively called waters, the voice of our God, when sounded though the voice be the same, yet uttered through the gifts bestowed on Zion, resembles the sound of many waters. Roaring and unintelligible to the enemies, but known the joyful sound. "And he shall utter his voice from Jerusalem." In the proclamation of the everlasting gospel, especially through the inspired apostles, they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and preached his gospel to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

"*And the heavens and the earth shall shake.*" This shaking, at the introduction of the new heavens and the new earth, as we have seen by reference to Heb. xii. 27, 28, signified the removing of the covenant which waxed old, with the things which could be shaken, which were not immutable; and it may also relate to the breaking in pieces all the kingdoms of this world, as set forth by the prophecy of Daniel in the interpretation of the king's dream of the stone taken from the mountain without hands, &c. Not only in the abolition of Jewish rites and ceremonies, in the introduction of the gospel ministration, but throughout all time where a vestage of legality is found, it is shaken by the voice which the Lord

utters from Jerusalem through all his saints. It may also relate to the judgments of God by which the man of sin and the powers of darkness shall be shaken, and finally consumed by the Spirit of his mouth.

"*But the Lord will be the hope of his people.*" Under all these trying circumstances, God's people shall not be left without hope, nor shall they be sustained on a false or precarious hope. The Lord himself, who is the hope of Israel, and the Savior thereof in time of trouble, shall be the hope of his people in the day referred to in our text. They shall see the folly of hoping in anything else. All other hopes must utterly fail; but the hope of his people is like an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and entering into that within the vail, for it is no less than Christ in them the hope of glory. Well did the apostle say, "*Who hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace.*" Though the earth be shaken, and the heavens also, though the mountains be removed and cast into the sea, and the waves thereof roar and be trouble, though the nations of the earth be, as they are at this day, convulsed with war and carnage, though the thrones of mighty monarchs crumble and totter to their fall, and though even the church of the living God be afflicted with wave upon wave, God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early. The shaking of the earth and heavens shall remove every refuge of lies, and take away every other dependence, so that the hope of God's people shall centre in the Lord alone. This hope is among the things that cannot be shaken, for it is in God, and full of immortality, and confirmed by the immutable promise of God. We can then adopt the words of Paul, "*In hope of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began.*"

"*And the strength of the children of Israel.*" God is no less the strength of Israel than the hope of his people. They are

truly in themselves considered a feeble folk, but their house is in the eternal Rock of Ages. The Lord has been their dwelling place in all generations, before the mountains were brought forth, or the world formed, or the earth, even from everlasting to everlasting. (Psalm xc. 1,2.) They have no other strength to rely upon. He is their strong tower, and their trust is in the shadow of his wing. While their enemies trust in horses and chariots, and go down to Egypt for help, and while they rely upon their own will and power for salvation, and upon their men and money, their schemes and plans for the conversion of the heathen world, and they look to the power of earthly kings and legislatures to defend them, God is the strength and salvation of his children. He is a wall of fire around about, and a glory in their midst. He is the sword of their excellency and the shield of their strength. They cannot be surprised by an enemy, because they dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

"*So shall ye know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain.*" In the execution of all that is embraced in these predictions, God will instruct his children, for it is written, they shall all be taught of the Lord. He teaches them effectually, for, "Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father [says Jesus] cometh unto me." They shall know that he is the Lord, the Jehovah, the self-existent God, by the fulfillment of his word, in which he has declared the end from the beginning, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. To know him is eternal life, and that eternal life they shall possess. They shall know him by his voice, for however terrible his voice may be to the enemies, his sheep know his voice and follow him; they are the blessed people which know the joyful sound; and they shall know that their deliverance and salvation is of him, and of him alone. But they shall not only know that his is the Lord, for they shall know that he is their God, according to

the express provisions of the new covenant. "I will be their God, and they shall be my people," and they shall all know me, from the least of them even to the greatest. And they shall also know the place of his abode, and where to find him. "*Dwelling in Zion*." This is the place of his rest, and here he will dwell forever, for he has desired Zion for his habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. They know him in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God manifest in the flesh, and it is only in Christ that they can know him, for no man cometh unto the Father but by him. He is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and all who have seen the Son have seen the Father also. He and his Father are one.

"*Then shall Jerusalem be holy, and there shall no strangers pass through her any more*." When the old Jerusalem, which, like Hagar, was in bondage with her children, should pass away, and the holy city, new Jerusalem, should descend from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband, then should she be holy and without blame or blemish before God, who is her Judge. Christ is her wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and she is freely, fully and forever justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Strangers and aliens sometimes passed through the old Jerusalem, broke down her walls, and defiled her sanctuary, but no stranger can enter this holy Jerusalem. Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And although we were all strangers and foreigners once, we are now made nigh by the blood of Christ, and are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God. The kingdom of God spoken of to Nicodemus, and this holy Jerusalem, mean the spiritual kingdom which is not of this world, which cometh not by observation, and which flesh and blood, even the flesh and blood of the saints, cannot inherit, because corruption cannot inherit incorruption. We all know to our sorrow that

carnal professors who are strangers to God by wicked works, do make profession of religion, and sometimes have a form of godliness, and that they are nominally regarded as members of the church. But although they may have a name to live, they are dead, and they remain as ignorant of the kingdom while nominally members of it, as those who make no profession. They cannot see it without being born again; they cannot enter it except they be born of the water and of Christ. Every member therefore has life in Christ in common with all other members. These mortal bodies which are born of the flesh are flesh, and their inheritance is in the earth. They are under the irrevocable sentence of death. They must be sown corruptible, in dishonor, &c., but they shall be quickened and raised up by the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead; they must put on immortality and incorruption, and be raised spiritual bodies, and brought in by adoption, but not in the relations and distinctions which now exist, for in the resurrection they shall not marry nor be given in marriage; they shall not be distinguished as male or female, young or old, bond or free, as now, but all conformed to the image of the Son of God, who is the firstborn among many brethren.

Middletown, N.Y.,
Nov. 15, 1855

Elder Gilbert Beebe

JOHN 1:9

Brother Beebe: - When you have leisure, please give your views on the words, "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," in its connection with the preceding and succeeding verses.

W.F. Kercheval Hanibal, Mo.,
August 17, 1863.

The Light of which the two Johns (the apostle and the Baptist) bear their concurrent testimony in the text and its connection, is designated as "the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," in distinction from all other lights, and in distinction from all the figures, types and images presented in the law and the prophets pointing to it. In the creation of the natural world God said, "Let there be light: and there was light." "And God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night." "And God said, Let there be a firmament," etc. "And God called the firmament Heaven." "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." (Gen. 1:3-6,8,14-16) The first chapter of John makes a direct allusion to the creation of the world, as emblematic of the creation of the new heaven and the new earth, and begins with the same words, "In the beginning." Moses, in Gen. 1:1, says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," and John 1:1-3, reads, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with

God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made," from which we learn not simply the fact that Christ was, at the time of the creation of the natural world, in company with God, as he was ever with God, both before and subsequently to the creation, as one brought up with him, but to us these words imply that the Word which was with God, and which was God, was to be emblematically set forth in the wonderful works of the natural heavens and earth, so that the heavens should declare (Christ as) the glory of God, and the firmament shew forth his handiwork. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." That is, the natural day figuratively speaks of and to the spiritual day. The old heavens and earth are figurative of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, and Christ and his kingdom are portrayed in all the wonders of the old creation. So the psalmist says, "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Everything belonging to the creation and organization of the natural world speaks in prophetic language of Christ and his spiritual kingdom. "In them," the psalmist adds, "hath he set a tabernacle for the sun; which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it." (Psalms 19:2-6) The firmament, which God called heaven, beautifully describes the kingdom of Christ, in which God has placed all the lights which adorn, beautify and illumine the spiritual firmament. The greater light, which represents Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, to rule the day, or gospel dispensation; the law, as a lesser light, to rule the dark or legal dispensation; and the stars also, for signs, seasons, days and years. Stars are emblematic of the gifts which are given in evidence of Christ's exaltation. He gave some prophets for one season, or set of days and years, etc., and some apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, adapted

for signs and seasons, days and years, under the gospel dispensation. So that all the lights in the natural firmament proclaim the spiritual lights with which God lighted up the spiritual firmament of the new world, wherein dwelleth righteousness. In the fourth verse of this first chapter the apostle John says of the Word of God, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." In this verse we not only learn that the light spoken of in our text is life, eternal life, immortality, but also that all mankind are in total darkness, or death, until this life which is light is communicated to them; and the same inspired John says, I John 5:11,12: "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, [or light] and this life [or light] is in his Son. He that hath the Sun, hath life, [or light] and he that hath not the Sun of God, hath not life [or light]." This life which is light is not imparted, or taken out of Christ and put in us, for it cannot be separated from him. The light of the natural sun cannot be separated from the sun and given to us, for if the sun were for a moment taken from the firmament its light would cease and all nature would be at once shrouded in darkness. As we cannot have the light of day without the sun, and as all the light beaming on us does not lessen or diminish the fountain of light in the sun, so neither can we have a single ray of spiritual light only as we have Christ in us the hope of glory, and all the light of immortality poured forth in living floods on all the saints in ages past has not diminished the splendor or fullness of Christ. Paul testifies that He "is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords; who only hath immortality [or light], dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen." (I Tim. 6:15,16) As in the lesser lights of moon and stars, which sparkle in the firmament of the natural heaven, they only shine as they are shined upon by the sun, so in the spiritual world the law, with all its types, the prophets, the apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, would be lost

sight of at once if Christ, the source and fountain of life and light, should cease to supply them with light, for they could be supplied from no other source; he only hath it, none beside him therefore can supply it. How dark was chaos before God commanded the light to shine out of darkness! "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." (Gen. 1:2,3) So we were once darkness, but now are we light in the Lord. But what a dark and shapeless mass were we until the Spirit moved on us with quickening power, until God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We do not read that God shined into our hearts, but he shined in our hearts; he first took possession of them and shined in them, and thus he gave us the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Christ, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person. But in tracing the analogy of the natural with the spiritual world, we remark that the natural sun had been shining in the firmament of the natural heavens nearly six thousand years before any of the present generation of mankind were illuminated by its light. The reason for this delay is very clear: we could not see the light of the sun until we were born into this world on which it shines, until we entered into the world, and we entered into this world by our natural birth. So until we were born again we could not see the kingdom of God, and this kingdom of God which was invisible to us until we were born again, is the antitype, in this figure, of the natural world. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that fleshly birth qualifies us to see the light of the natural sun; but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and this is indispensable to qualify us to comprehend the light of the Sun of Righteousness. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are

foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." Now, as we are told positively that only the Spirit of God can know the things of God, and that no man possesses that Spirit until he is born of the Spirit, and that all the things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned, we can see how impossible it is for any one to enjoy the light of immortality until he is born into the spiritual world. God has hidden these things from even the wise and prudent of this natural world, and he has revealed them to babes. We must be born in order to sustain the character of babes, either in nature or grace. By this spiritual birth God's children are delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the marvelous light and life of Christ, for as he is our life, so he is our light, for the life was and is the light of men. John the Baptist tells us how the children of the light, who believe on the name of Jesus, came into the world, which is lighted with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. God gives them power to become the sons of God, manifestly, by a spiritual birth. "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Here are three negatives crowded into this sentence, with but one affirmative, for the very evident purpose of settling this matter decidedly, effectually and forever, that the birth which alone can bring us into the world of life, light and immortality, of which he speaks, is not of the will or works of men, but exclusively of God. How impossible it is for men in their unregenerated state to know God, or Christ, is still further demonstrated from the fact that he was in the world, and the world was made by him, and yet the world knew him not. Paul says, None of the princes of this world knew him, for if they had known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. To know him is eternal life, or true light. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus

Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) When he came unto his own, his own received him not. This is equally true, whether we apply it to his own kindred according to the flesh, his own nation, the Jews, or to those whom the Father had given to him, for no man has ever even felt disposed to receive him as the eternal life and light of the knowledge of the glory of God until this life or light was revealed in him. We know that the Jews did reject him as the promised Messiah for whom they professed to be looking. He was refused by the Jewish builders, but God has made him the head of the corner. So Christians feel disposed to say, also:

"We turned our eyes away,
And treated him with scorn."

We hid, as it were, our faces from him, but when it pleased God to reveal his Son in us, when he, as our life and true Light, took possession of our hearts, how changed was our condition, we were brought out of darkness into the true light, from death to life, from condemnation and wrath into justification, liberty and peace.

Still further, we are told in the context that, "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not." It is not only true that the darkness of the Jews and Gentiles was such when Christ was among them in the flesh that they knew him not, but it is also true that the darkness of our earthly nature is such that where he dwells and shines in his quickened and regenerated people the darkness of our flesh, of our carnal minds, of our reasoning powers of the natural minds, no more comprehend him than the carnal minds of the unregenerate can. This, we conclude, is the reason why the Christian ever doubts or fears. The sensibilities of our fleshly nature demand some evidence of an indwelling immortality, which only the faith of the Son of God can comprehend. The Jews required external signs such as they

could comprehend, like loaves and fishes, and things which the wisdom of this world could understand, and so do our reasoning powers of mind struggle for some assurance that is clear and tangible to our fleshly sensibilities, and for the want of such evidence the old man is forever disputing the validity of the Christian's hope. All our unbelief, all our murmurings, disquietude, rebellion and disobedience arise from our flesh, which wars against the Spirit, and which brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members, and show very clearly that the darkness of our fleshly nature has utterly failed to comprehend the light of immortality which dwells in us, for the life which we live in the flesh we live by the faith of the Son of God, who hath loved us, and gave himself for us.

How glorious is the contemplation of this subject; Christ is our life, our light and our salvation. Christ dwells in us, and our life is in him, and he dwells in the bosom of the Father, therefore our life is hid with Christ in God. All the godhead dwells in him bodily, and the saints are one with him, as he is one with the Father.

"Hail sacred union, firm and strong!
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when he rose,
One when he triumphed o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraphs sung all hell's defeat.

This sacred tie forbids their fears,
For all he is, or has, is theirs;
With him their head, they stand or fall,
Their life, their surety, and their all."

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 397 – 403

JOHN II. 17.

BROTHER BEEBE: –As I have never troubled you with any request before, if it is not asking too much of you, I would be pleased to have the benefit of you, I would be pleased to have the benefit of your understanding of John ii. 17, especially of the words, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." What kind of zeal was that, and whose house?

As ever, your sister in hope of immortality beyond this vale of tears,

MARY PARKER.
Fort Worth, Texas, Dec. 21, 1879.

REPLY. – Dr. Watts, in paraphrasing this subject, seems to have understood the zeal spoken of as the zeal of our Lord Jesus Christ, as he renders it in verse,

"Zeal for the temple of his
Consumed his life, exposed his blood;
Reproaches at his glory thrown
He felt, and mourn'd them as his own."

And it is very true that the holy zeal of our Redeemer was such as to require a perfect devotion of all that pertained to him as the Mediator and Redeemer of his people. He gave himself for us, he laid down his life for his sheep, and nothing less than himself could suffice to accomplish the work which he came from heaven to do, and to suffer in the execution of the will of the Father. In the sense of his own, his own personal zeal and perfect, unreserved self-devotion to his great work, may be fitly expressed as having eaten him up.

But it is said in our text, as also in Psalm lxi. 9, "The zeal of *thine house* hath eaten me up." To our mind there is a

great difference between his own zeal and that of those of his house. Their zeal was exemplified in making his Father's house a den of thieves; while his zeal was signally manifested in driving the desecrators of the temple from the house which was ordained to be called a house of prayer.

The temple itself was a figure of the body of our Lord, which by divine appointment was to be destroyed, or put to death, and raised up again in three days, as we are informed in the verses immediately following our text. The body in which Jesus was to suffer and arise was the seed of Abraham, which he took on him in being made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death. The Jews, as the carnal seed of Abraham, occupied the temple at the time when Jesus came suddenly, according to Malachi iii. 1, and fully demonstrated who they were who should not abide the day of his coming. The carnal Jews, at the time of his coming, stood as high in religious profession and zeal as to the Pharisees of our day; but they made void the law of God by their traditions. In their zeal and mad infatuation they had ignored the law of God by their traditions, in which they had presumed to make such modifications, amendments and improvements of God's law as their carnal wisdom suggested, until Christ as the anti-type of the temple was eaten up and swallowed out of sight.

It may be well for the religious will-worshipers of our times to observe how the zeal of their prototypes made void the law of God by their traditions. The laws of God are always perfect and positive; they cannot be changed, improved, or in any wise changed, and still remain the law or laws of God. The law of God required the Israelites to bring offerings of oxen, and sheep, and doves, or pigeons, and money, at certain times; and as some of the people of Israel lived in distant localities from Jerusalem, and it was not so convenient to bring the required offerings with them, the rulers of the

temple seemed to have a very plausible plea for laying in a stock of oxen, sheep, doves &c., suitable for offerings, and what a labor-saving accommodation it would be to find the necessary offerings at the very place where they were to be offered. And as the monetary currency in use at that time and place, much of it bore the image and superscription of Caesar, it was not thought suitable for the treasury of the Lord, that difficulty was obviated by the zeal of pious brokers who spread their tables in the temple, ready for a small percentage to furnish the orthodox coins required. This kind of business prevailed and monopolized the temple, which was sacredly consecrated to God as a house of prayer, until the zeal of those who profaned it concealed all its typical representation of the Messiah which was to come.

Elder Gilbert Beebe –Editorial
Middletown, N. Y., February 1, 1880

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 3
February 1, 1880

REMARKS ON JOHN 3:5.

In reply to brother John W. Henley, of Georgia.

"Jesus answered and said, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

The kingdom of God, in the third verse of this chapter, and the kingdom of God in our text, we understand to be one and the same, and means the organized church of our Lord Jesus Christ, which when Jesus held this discourse with Nicodemus, was soon to be set up in gospel order, according to former predictions, Daniel 2:44; Isaiah 32:1. This kingdom was not to be like any of the kingdoms of the earth, and is therefore called the kingdom of God; it was not to be governed by any human power or policy, and is therefore also called the kingdom of God. Typified by the Jewish Theocracy, but still differing very essentially from it, as that embraced the natural seed of Abraham, and had a worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances; but this should embrace only those who are of the faith of Abraham, and are his seed anti-typically, being Christ's. Galatians 3:29. The former was a natural, but the latter a spiritual kingdom. Its King is the Lord from heaven; its law is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, written in the hearts of his subjects by the Holy Spirit, and his subjects are they only who are born of incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever. Born of God, of the water and of the Spirit, and consequently they are all purely spiritual. "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." I Corinthians 15:50. Hence, therefore, the indispensable necessity of the new birth, without which no man can either see or enter this spiritual

organization. “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

In the typical organization, all that were born (of the flesh) in Abraham’s house, or bought with his money, were required to be circumcised with the circumcision made with hands, on pain of expulsion from the privileges of the covenant under which that commonwealth was instituted. But under the new and anti-typical covenant, all who are born of God, in his house, and bought with the precious blood of Christ, and none others can be recognized as subjects of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, are entitled to the privileges of the house of God. Under the new covenant, “He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision that is outward in the flesh.” For if the children of the flesh could be made the children of God, no new birth would be required. “That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” Romans 9:8. “But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God.” Romans 2:28,29.

From the above testimony it is clear that the kingdom of God, of heaven, being purely spiritual, can admit of nothing carnal, and therefore flesh and blood cannot come into it. Carnal men may make a profession of religion and have a form of godliness, and even hold a nominal standing as members of the church of God; but as the kingdom is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, their membership is only nominal. The kingdom is spiritual, and the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I Corinthians 2:14. And as that only is spirit, which is born of the Spirit, they cannot see or enter the kingdom of which we write, except they be born again. All

the efforts of men, therefore, to educate, reform, or bring children or adults into the kingdom of God are futile and abortive, because no operation can make them spiritual; for only that can be spiritual which is born of the Spirit. The slave may cringe under the lash, and yield a reluctant obedience to the coercive power that compels his submission; but no earthly power can make a man love God. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Romans 8:7,8.

Having, as we trust, clearly demonstrated from the Scriptures that the kingdom spoken of in our text is spiritual, and that all mankind by nature are carnal, sold under sin, and consequently incapable of seeing or entering it by anything they can do, or that men or angels can do for them, we will now pass to consider what it is to be born of the water and of the Spirit.

Upon this vitally important subject, ourselves and some of our brethren have been accused of being too metaphysical; but to the science of metaphysics we make no claim, but our desire is to be scriptural; and as the words *born* and *born again*are frequently used by holy inspiration, we feel justified in believing they mean something of importance. We know that the natural birth is the bringing into manifestation something that is begotten, and which had existence before it was born; and we infer that a spiritual birth in that respect is analogous. This inference we think is strengthened by the explanation to Nicodemus, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." A fleshly seed produces a fleshly production, and a spiritual seed will produce a spiritual production. The descendants of the earthly Adam are developed by their natural birth, in the nature and image of Adam; and "as is the earthy [Adam] such are they that are earthy." "And so it is written, The first

man Adam was made a living soul;" consequently all who are born of the flesh are living souls; Adam, their earthly progenitor, when animated with the breath of life, became a living soul; so all his posterity when born of the flesh are developed as living souls. But as all the posterity of Adam have sinned, and the law has said, The soul that sinneth it shall die, death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.

We cannot, therefore, inherit eternal life from the earthly Adam, or by a fleshly birth. Slain by the law, we are all dead in sin and held forever in that death, unless we be made partakers of that eternal life which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. For, "this life was with the Father, and was manifested." "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." Hence, the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven, is a Quickening Spirit. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5:21. The Son is, therefore, a quickening Spirit. The life which we have from the earthly Adam is mortal, and involved in sin and death; but the life we have in Christ is immortal, pure and eternal. As we were brought forth in our earthly relation by our first or natural birth, so, if we understand correctly, we were brought forth in our relation to Christ when quickened by his Spirit, or when he as our life was revealed in us by his quickening Spirit. Our relation to the earth ("Dust thou art,") is developed in our fleshly birth. Our relation to God is developed in our spiritual birth. In our first, we bear the image of the earthly Adam; but in being born again, we bear the image of the heavenly Adam, for he is the Lord from heaven. All in us, therefore, that is corrupt, vile, sinful and mortal, is born of the flesh, and from this fleshly nature in which there dwells no good thing, arises a constant warfare in every Christian against all

that is spiritual, holy and pure; so that all Christians while in the flesh are called to deny themselves, to crucify the old man, and to put on the new man which after God (not Adam) is created in righteousness and true holiness. While all there is in the children of God is pure, spiritual and holy, is born of God, and cannot sin, for his (God's) seed remaineth in him; he cannot sin, because he is born of God. I John 3:9.

As to the precise meaning of our Lord in the use of the words *born of the water,* some of our most gifted brethren have differed; some supposed that the birth of the water meant the natural birth; but this view conflicts with our understanding; for to our mind Christ is speaking of the necessity of being born of the water and of the Spirit, in contradistinction from, and as both being necessary after having been born of the flesh. A man already born of the flesh, before he can possibly see or enter the kingdom, must be born of the water and of the Spirit before he can enter the kingdom of heaven.

Others have supposed that to be baptized is to be born of the water. This supposition we cannot admit, only in a figurative sense. As baptism is a figurative ordinance, designed to represent death, burial and resurrection, so it may, and does most beautifully represent being buried with Christ by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we should walk in newness of life. The ordinance of Christian baptism buries us into water, but not into death; but clearly represents our burial with Christ into death, and resurrection with him to newness of life. It may be much easier for us to show what it does not, than what it does mean; but it is far better for us to wait for our spiritual Interpreter to lead our minds into a correct understanding of the Scriptures, than to attempt to force an explanation which is not clearly harmonious with the word of God and experience of the saints.

As to what it is to be born of the Spirit, there is but little room for doubtful disputation among those who have experienced that work. It is to receive the Spirit of Christ; for if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; and none can have that Spirit except they be born of it. And as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. It is a spirit which the natural man cannot receive, and which our Lord says "the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." But as that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and the spiritual judgeth all things, even the deep things of God. It is by the indwelling of the Spirit that we know that we have passed from death unto life.

As brother Henley particularly desires our views in regard to being born of the *water,* we will give such views as we have on that part of the text. John, in declaring the faith of the children of God, says, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God;" and in his testimony of the Christ, he further says, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth; the spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree in one." I John 5:6-8. It is our conviction that if we could clearly understand the sense in which the water and the blood are used in this text, all would be plain in regard to our being born of the water and the Spirit. It refers to the coming of Christ, not into the world, when born of Mary, but when he came into his kingdom or church, and received his coronation as the Christ and Lord, and was given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. The three most prominent witnesses of the Messiahship of our Lord, by which the faith of the saints

is established in the discriminating doctrine that "Jesus is the Christ," are first: that of the spirit which was given, when we read in the book of Isaiah the prophet, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." "And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." Luke 4:16-22. Observe that the signification of the name *Christ,* is the Anointed.

Hence the descent of the Spirit of the Lord God upon him was an indisputable evidence or witness that he was the Christ of God. The next in order was when he came to Jordan to John to be baptized. He came in that ordinance by water, and on that memorable occasion the witness of his being the Christ, and that he had come in the flesh, was most convincingly demonstrated when John, by a direct sign which was given him, identified him, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Then and there the Spirit descended like a dove and abode on him in witness of his Messiahship, and the heavens were opened to him, and the voice of God, in audible words declared, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:13-17. The third witness of his identity as the Christ of God, is found in the efficiency of his precious blood which was shed for the remission of sins. So strikingly demonstrative was this witness that his very murderers were constrained to cry, "Truly this was the Son of God!" Thus Jesus in opening the way into his kingdom, and in entering into the holiest of all, entered by the blood of the everlasting covenant, having obtained eternal redemption for his people. In perfect harmony with these witnesses, as we conceive, all his people come into the kingdom of God. The Spirit, the water and the blood must agree in their identification as the children of his kingdom. First, the Spirit of the Lord God, which is the quickening spirit, makes them alive, quickens and animates them with spiritual vitality, and makes them feel the need of

living water, which can only be found in Christ, who is the place of broad rivers and streams. So far as we can perceive any distinction between being born of the water, and of the Spirit, the Spirit first operates upon the sinner, and makes him sensible that he is guilty before God, righteously condemned by the just and holy law, and utterly helpless and bankrupt. Then the water of life flowing through Christ from the throne of God and the Lamb, with cleansing, cheering and life inspiring power, is applied, and he is born of the water into the liberty of the sons of God.

To be born of the water and of the Spirit, in this view of the subject, is equivalent to being born of the life and of the Spirit. The Spirit is the power by which the work is effected, and the water is the life which the Spirit gives, and hence, allowing the figurative meaning of water as frequently used in the Scriptures to signify vitality, we cannot be born of the Spirit without being born of the water. In this application, the three which bear witness in earth give harmonious testimony. The Spirit in quickening bears witness that we are born of God; the water of life flows to the quickened child in corroborating evidence that he has passed from death unto life, cleansing and purifying and consecrating to a spiritual state; and the blood of Christ, in meeting, canceling and perfectly satisfying all the demands of law and justice, all agree, not only in demonstration that the sinner is redeemed and born again, but also that Jesus is the Christ of God, and the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

In the preceding views we have spoken only of the birth of the water and of the Spirit in its experimental and personal application to the individual experience of the saints; but if we mistake not, the birth of water may have a two fold application; and as being named first in our text, in its application to the redemption of the church as a body. The

apostle speaks of the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:5-7. This washing of regeneration has effected the justification of the saints, and secured the grounds of heirship according to the hope of eternal glory; it must, therefore, refer to the death and resurrection of Christ; for he was delivered for our offences and raised from the dead for our justification. The *washing* of regeneration must mean the putting away our sins by the sacrifice of himself, for he gave himself for us for that very purpose, that he might cleanse us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, and present them without spot or wrinkle before God. He died our death, suffered in our flesh, and the penalty of the divine law was executed on us in him, so that when he died for us all, then were all dead; but he was quickened by the Spirit, and that quickening Spirit was through him poured abundantly on us, so that the apostle could testify that we are quickened together with him, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. All this was necessary and indispensably so, that we should receive the adoption of sons, and be made heirs according to the hope of eternal glory. If sons, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ. By his resurrection from the dead, we are begotten again to a lively hope, and to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that cannot fade away.

This washing of water by the Word is still more clearly referable to the death and resurrection of the church in Christ, by Paul, thus: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but

that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Ephesians 5:25-32. If this washing of water by the word was the washing of regeneration, it must have been effected by the Spirit, the water and the blood, which bear witness in earth, and it was accomplished by the death and resurrection of Christ.

But once more. The apostle again testifies of Christ; saying, "And he is the Head of the body, the church; who is the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. And having made peace through the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometimes alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprovable in his sight." Colossians 1:17-22. Observe his death is called a *washing,* and his resurrection a *birth;* must this not then be the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost? And if it be, was it not shed abundantly on the members of his body through him? In reference to his resurrection it was said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Psalm 2:7. And in Acts 13:32,33 "And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made to the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee."

Was the Head of the body, the church, begotten, and born from the dead, and his body and members left in death? Or did he abolish death and bring life and immortality to light in his resurrection? If he has begotten us again to a lively (vital) hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and we are washed and cleansed from sin by his death and resurrection, and presented to himself a glorious church, free from spot or wrinkle, can this be any other than the washing of regeneration, the washing of water by the word? If this be so, then it follows that the church was born of the water when Christ arose from the dead and became the first fruits of them that slept, and all the members in him were born of the water, and received the washing of regeneration, when Christ washed and cleansed and purified them, at that time when a nation was born at once, and that Scripture was fulfilled, “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.” Isaiah 26:19. And certain it is that except a man be, in this sense, born of the water, and in due time quickened by the Holy Spirit which through him was shed on his people, he can neither see, nor enter into the kingdom of God.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 503 – 511

JOHN III. 7.

“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

We can conceive of no subject of more vital importance to the children of God than that of which or Savoir spoke in these words to Nicodemus. Heirship is based upon sonship, and sonship is manifested by birth. Hence the apostle says, “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” And to the sons of God he says, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” – Rom. viii. 14, 16, 17. And again, in the same chapter, verse 9, “Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Therefore the indwelling of the spirit of Christ is the infallible witness that those in whom his spirit dwells are children and heirs of God. In this vital relationship all who led by the spirit of God are manifestly heirs to an inheritance that “is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, which is reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” – 1 Peter i. 4, 5. Now this is an inheritance which, being purely spiritual, flesh and blood cannot inherit. “Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood CANNOT inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” – 1 Cor. xv. 50. Hence the indispensable necessity of being born of the Spirit to qualify us to inherit the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is spiritual; “But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither CAN he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things; yet he himself is judged of no man.” – 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15. The kingdom of God being spiritual, is totally invisible to all such as are destitute of spiritual discernment. Marvel not, then, that Jesus has so

emphatically declared, that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nichodemus, like all other natural men, marveled at this saying of Jesus, and as he knew not how it could be, he inquired, "How can a man be born when he is old?" &c. As a natural man, he could conceive of no other birth than that which is of the flesh. But Jesus spake of a birth which is *from above*, as the margin reads in both instances in which it is spoken of by him in this chapter. Our birth of the flesh is like the birth of all others of the animal creation, of this world, and not from above, in the sense in which the sons of God are brought forth into manifestation. If therefore the birth of our body, soul and spirit, with all the elements belonging to our earthly nature, could be repeated a thousand times, that would give us no additional light by which to *see* the kingdom of God, or to discern any of the things of the spirit of God. Until we were born of the flesh, we had no capacity to see or know the things of this natural world. Although we were all created in the earthly Adam, and sinned and fell in him, and death passed on us in him almost six thousand years ago, yet not one of the present generation saw or had any knowledge of the things of this world until we were brought into it by a birth of the flesh, over which we had neither volition nor power.

If then the things of nature are so wonderful to natural men, how can any man know of the things of the spirit of God until by a spiritual birth they are brought forth by that birth which is from above? Nature has no power to effect or hasten, or to prevent a birth from above. Nor has any man power of himself, nor by the aid of nature, to become a son of God or an heir of immortality. "But as many as received him, [Christ,] to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." – John i. 12, 13. Though we were born

of the blood, or will of Abraham, or David, or born again of the flesh a thousand times, it could not change our relation to this world, or make us sons of God or heirs of glory. Nor can any man receive Christ manifestly except by a birth from above. The new birth is not – cannot be effected by anything short of an incorruptible seed, which is by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. Hence the birth which brings into manifestation the sons of God, is from above; and the only incorruptible seed that can produce a birth which is spiritual, and a life which is incorruptible, immortal and eternal, is found alone in Christ, who is the second Adam, or progenitive head of his seed; and he, being himself the Lord from heaven, the everlasting Father, all who are born of him are born of God, and are the sons of God, theheirs of God, and joint heirs with him who is the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. And no man can come unto the Father but by him, for he is in the Father, and the Father is in him, and he and the Father are one; and he and his seed are one, and the heirship is joint and indivisible. "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." – Deut. xxxii. 9. And the Lord is the portion of his people forever. – Ps. lxxiii. 26; cxix. 57.

The only seed then which can possibly produce the birth of which our Savior spake, is from God in Christ. All that seed is treasured in Christ; it is therefore incorruptible, undefiled, and cannot fade away. To be born of any other seed than that which is in Christ, can develop no vital relationship to God, no joint heirship with Christ. If we are born of God, the spirit of Christ dwells in us; and although now our earthly nature, including all in us that is born of the flesh, and not born from above, wars against the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, yet these vile bodies are redeemed, and by the indwelling spirit sealed with the holy spirit of promise; and this indewelling spirit, being the same which raised up from the dead the crucified body of the Lord

Jesus, shall in due time quicken also our mortal bodies, and so change them as to fashion them like the glorious body of our risen Lord.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him." – 1 John iii. 2.

We have known him in his fleshly body as a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, in a body of our flesh, subject to pain, distress and death; but we shall see him as he is in his resurrected, immortal body, begotten from the dead by the glory of the Father, on which death hath no power. Yea, and when we shall see him as he is, we shall be like him, for we also are begotten of God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and as certainly as he has risen from the dead, as the first begotten and first born from the dead, all his members shall experience a like birth from the dead. "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." – Rom. viii. 29. They who shall be accounted worthy of that world to which the children of God are destined, "and the resurrection from the dead, are the children of God, *being children of the resurrection*." – Luke xx. 36. To and in this relation to God and this resurrection, all who shall be accounted worthy are begotten of God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, whose crucified body was begotten and born from the dead by the glory of the Father; and as his resurrection from the dead was a birth, to which his body was begotten and born by the Father, so Paul testifies "Concerning his [God's] Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to this flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead." – Romans i. 3, 4. This begetting and birth from the dead relates to his body of flesh in which

he was crucified, and which was the seed of David; for in his prior relation to the Father, his goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. – Micah v. 2. As the Word which was with God, and which was God, his Mediatorial and priestly relations as King of righteousness and Priest of the Most High God, he is "without beginning of days or end of life." "Because he continueth ever, he hath an unchangeable priesthood." – Heb. vii. 23, 24. Ye the body of his flesh in which he became incarnate, which was made under the law, was made under the law, was made of the seed of David. And as neither David nor his seed after the flesh could be received into glory as heirs of God in any other relationship than that of sons of God, even the flesh of our High Priest was begotten and born from the dead, and in that resurrection-birth, produced not by the fleshly seed of David, "was declared [or demonstrated] to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." – Rom. i. 4. In his birth, in the flesh, of the virgin, who was herself of the seed of David, Jesus was made flesh and dwelt among us, and in that flesh all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily; but the body of his flesh was prepared for him. – Heb. x. 5. In this incarnation "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of our salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." – Heb. ii. 10, 11. In the flesh he became fully identified with the many sons which he has brought though death unto glory. As it is further declared in this same connection, "Forasmuch then as the children [or the sons, whom he was to bring unto glory] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same [flesh

and blood], that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to god, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." If then it was expedient that the immaculate body of our great Redeemer should suffer and die, and be begotten and born from the dead, that he might ascend up where he was before, and be glorified with the eternal Father's own self, the glory that he had with the Father before the world began, can we marvel that he said to Nicodemus, Ye must be born again? Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. A nearer and more vital relation to God than that which is born of the flesh, even though it were of the seed of David or of Abraham, is indispensably required to secure that spiritual inheritance which belongs exclusively to the heirs of God, in joint heirship with our Lord Jesus Christ. If sons, then heirs: and it follows, if we are not sons of God, we must be aliens; and aliens cannot be heirs with those who, as Isaac was, are children of the free woman, or of that Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of all the children of promise.

In the new birth, which is so indispensable to a manifest heirship as children of God, and without which no man can either see or enter into the kingdom of God, the sons of God receive the first fruits of the Spirit, by which they are personally sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, and which is the earnest of their inheritance as sons and heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ to that inheritance which is reserved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and ready to be revealed at the last time. In this birth of the Spirit, a new man is born

from above, and a new treasure is committed to the earthen vessel of mercy which God hath afore ordained unto glory; and this new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, being born of God, and not of the flesh, claims relationship to his heavenly parent, crying Abba, Father. The production of the incorruptible seed, which is by the Word of God, that liveth and abideth forever, being born of God, is incorruptible; it cannot sin, for if it could, it would not be incorruptible. It is born of God, and his seed, by which the birth is produced, remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. – 1 John iii. 9.

Now let us inquire that change takes place in the person of the man who is the subject of this new birth? One says, Whereas I was once blind, now I see. This is true; but who is it that was blind and now sees? We are told that in the Word which was made flesh was life, and the life was the light of men; that this is the true light that lighteth every man that cometh in to the world. And still further, "And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not." Was there ever a darker place than the heart and understanding of the sinner who is made the subject of God's amazing grace? "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure [of the light of life] in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." – 2 Cor. iv. 6, 7. The vessel of mercy is still so dark that he comprehendeth not the light and life which shines in him. It is Christ who shines. He is our life, and the excellency of it is of God, and not of us. We can by the powers of our natural mind neither see, comprehend or tell whence the Spirit that shines in us comes, or whither it goeth, any more than we can tell whence the wind cometh and goeth. – John iii. 8. But this new man within us, which is born of God, judgeth all things, for he is spiritual, and has

spiritual discernment. So when one declares to us that he was blind, and now sees, if we have confidence in his profession, we believe that he is born of that life which is light, and he is a child of light. But it is not by any improvement of his carnal nature that he now sees, for the excellence is of God who shines in him, and all the glory of God that he can see is in the face of Jesus Christ; and this is a revelation to his faith, not to his carnal or fleshly reasoning powers.

He says moreover, The things which I once loved, I now hate; and the things I once hated, I now love. This also is true, and so true that if it were not so, we could have no confidence in his experience; but what is it that loves holiness and purity, and hates sin and vanity? Is it the old man, which is corrupt with his affections and lusts, or is it the new man? The inspired apostle says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

But, says still another, surely the faculties and elements of my nature are changed, for my mouth, which was full of cursing and bitterness, is now employed in singing a new song of praise to God and the Lamb; and my feet, which were swift to shed blood, now cheerfully convey me to the house of prayer; and all the elements of my nature, which once drank in iniquity as the ox drinketh water abhor those things in which I once so much delighted. This subjection of our members we readily admit; but is this a change of our fleshly nature, or is it not rather the power of reigning grace triumphing over the evil propensities of a still corrupt, depraved nature, which has to be continually watched, kept under, and held in subjection as with bridle and bit? It would seem extravagant for any of us to claim a nature more radically changed than that of the holy apostle who said, "In

me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." – Rom. vii. 18. "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection; lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." – 1 Cor. ix. 27. If our earthly nature were by the new birth, or by any other power, changed from a vile depraved and sinful nature, where would be any conflict in us between the old man, which we are commanded to resist and crucify, and the inner man, in which we delight in the law of God? It is true the christian can say, with Paul, "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I found not;" and while we have a will to serve the law of God, we know that is not the will of our flesh; but it is God who worketh in us to both to will and to do of his good pleasure. The man who before his new birth was in love with the vanities of this world, desiring wealth, honor and fame, still finds it hard to fully restrain the cravings of his nature after these things, even after they have become loathsome and grievous to the new man. We confess a lack of confidence in the evidence of a work of grace in those who profess to be so pure in their earthly nature that they have no trouble in restraining unhallowed propensities of their earthly nature; but we are inclined to believe that many of them have mistaken the aversion they feel to sin, and ascribe to nature that which rightfully belongs to the reigning grace of God. For truly the saints "are of the circumcision who worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." – Phil. iii. 3. But never before they were born of God did they see so plainly and feel so deeply or mourn so bitterly the deep depravity of their carnal nature as they invariably do subsequently to that event. Our earthly nature still subsists on the things which grow out of the earth, which is cursed of God for man's sake, nor can it subsist on the spiritual food that cheers the new and inner man. But, notwithstanding the present craving of our carnal propensities, which war against the heaven-born life of the new man, the saints rejoice in the glorious prospect of a final

victory over all the pollutions of the flesh, since God has promised, by the pen of the apostle, that “the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” Hence “the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.” – Romans viii. 16, 21. And after having received the first fruits of the Spirit, by which they are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, they still “groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body.” To that adoption and vital sonship they are now begotten by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and they shall assuredly in due time be born, in their final personal resurrection, in which their vile body shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and they shall be raised incorruptible and immortal, in spiritual bodies like the glorious body of their risen Lord. Born then from the dead, they shall be like the angels in heaven, and be vitally the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.
February 15, 1880

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 4
February 15, 1880

JOHN IV. 14.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

This text presents a part of what our Lord said to the woman of Samaria, and like all the words which proceeded from his mouth, is full of interest and instruction to those who are divinely prepared to understand and appreciate the doctrine which he taught. The circumstances attending this interview are calculated to impress the mind with a sense of the perfection of the divine arrangement in the counsel of God, and the connection of his providence with the purpose of his grace. In the execution of the great work assigned our Redeemer when here in the flesh, he had occasion to go from place to place, and many circumstances which to the natural mind might seem trifling or accidental, are shown to be of vital importance, and highly essential to the accomplishment of the work which as the Mediator was given him to do. Such was the case in this instance; he had departed from Judea to go into Galilee, and he *must needs* go through Samaria. We are not informed of any other reason for this necessity or *needs-be,* but what appears in the circumstance of his meeting the woman at Jacob's well, the interview and conversation which took place, the effect produced on the woman, and also on the citizens of Samaria, who came out to see him, and who professed faith in him as the true Messiah. As he must needs go through Samaria, this woman must needs come out of the city at that very time to draw water, and every other incident recorded was equally important. And thus we believe in every instance of the calling, quickening and conversion of the children of the kingdom, the special providence of God may be clearly traced. God has

appointed the bounds of our habitation, so that we cannot pass them.

"His decree who form'd the earth,
Fixed our first and second birth;
Parents, native place and time,
All appointed were by him."

By a well directed train of providential events, we find the Redeemer in conversation with the woman of Samaria. He asks of her drink from her pitcher; she expresses her surprise that he, being a Jew, should ask drink of a woman of Samaria, as the Jews and Samaritans had no dealings together. "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The woman, like all the Arminian world, entertained the false impression that God is as dependent on means and instrumentalities for the accomplishment of his purposes, as we are, for she knew not the gift of God, nor the Son of God, whom to know is eternal life, therefore she betrayed her ignorance of both by saying to him, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep." This is a prevalent delusion among all will-worshipers and work-mongrel religionists, that God is dependent on his creatures to furnish him with means and instruments with which to supply the waters of life. Sinners are now represented as sinking by thousands into hell, not because they are sinners, but for the want of means, men, money, tracts, schools, or something to draw with, and it is published far and wide that if men would be more active and liberal in supplying the Lord with something to draw with, multitudes would be converted, and the earth would soon be all evangelized. Whence, thought this ignorant woman, can he supply the water of life of which he speaks, unless he draw it from the well, and as the well is deep, how can he draw it

thence without *means?* "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever shall drink of this water shall thirst again." And it is even so with all who drink, religiously, of the religious systems, doctrines, works and inventions of men, which result from their popular means-using machinery, who for the time being feel their natural passions of fear, remorse and terror somewhat allayed, but surely as there is a God in heaven, they shall thirst again. Their hopes which are predicated on their works and instrumentalities will fail them, when God shall execute the words recorded, Isaiah xxviii. 17, 18. Like the waters of earthly fountains, which may satisfy our natural thirst for a time, but the draught must be repeated as often as the thirst recurs; so with false religious impressions, they only satisfy a carnal, depraved propensity which will recur from time to time as their fleshly passions are excited, and their natural fears disturbed; but in all such cases a revival, through the agency of a protracted meeting, exciting preaching, or some other instrumentality to *draw with,* is required at short intervals, to prevent their falling from what they call grace, and losing their religion; for they shall thirst again.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." On this part of the subject our views are called for; and while we cheerfully give them, we will remark that our views, or the views of any other person, are of little worth except so far as they are sustained by the word of the Lord. Whatever views may be entertained on the Scriptures, cannot change the truth which they express. From what we have written, the reader will perceive that we understand our Lord to draw a striking contrast between the earthly fountains, which are relied upon for salvation, and which are only available by the use of humanly devised means and instrumentalities to *draw with,* and his own method of salvation by grace, which is

altogether superior to and independent of the agencies, means and instrumentalities of either good or bad men.

Three propositions are suggested. First, the figurative import of the water, which Jesus gives. Second, his purpose to give it to some, but not to all of the human family. And third, the lasting and blessed effects of the water of life resulting to those unto whom Christ shall give it.

First. *The water,* and what is figuratively signified by it. It is here called, in distinction from that drawn by instrumentalities from earthly fountains, *living water;* and it is elsewhere called the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb; and, as defined on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, it signifies that Spirit which they that believe on him shall receive, (John viii. 37-39). Having reference to that Spirit which he promised to send after his resurrection, Even the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not neither knoweth him; but ye know him, because he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. (John xiv. 17.) Hence, when preaching the doctrine of the new and spiritual birth, he said to Nicodemus, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” - John iii. 5. Our natural birth, by which we are made manifest as the members of the old Adam, is of the flesh, and the life developed in that fleshly birth is not abiding, it is mortal and transitory, like the waters drawn from Jacob’s well. But that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and it is life, and unlike our natural life, it is spiritual, immortal and eternal. Those who are born of it, receive it, are sealed by it, as the Holy Spirit of promise, and they are sealed unto the day of redemption, that is the day of the redemption of our body. (Eph. i. 13, 14; Rem. viii. 23.) This Spirit of life and immortality which is called the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, (Rem. viii. 2,) and which is not the spirit of

bondage, again to fear, like the spirit of will-worship, instrumentalities, bondage and fear; but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall in due time also quicken the mortal bodies of all who possess it, by the spirit that dwelleth in them. (Rem. viii. 11.) This Spirit of life and immortality is the Spirit of Christ, and if any man have it not, he is none of his; and it is Christ, as the apostle declares, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness." - Rom. Viii. 8-10.

From these, with numerous other Scriptures, it is clearly demonstrated that the living water which Christ giveth, is the Spirit of life and immortality, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father. Water is an appropriate and instructive figure of this Spirit of life, and the fitness of the emblem may be contemplated in the following particulars:

1. Water is an indispensable element; natural life cannot be sustained without it. So in the absence of this spiritual life, we were represented as being in a pit wherein is no water. (Zech. ix. 11.) And the fruitless inventions of the carnal Israelites, in looking for life and salvation by their own carnal works and instrumentalities, are charged with having committed two horrible things, for says God, They have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water. (Jer. ii. 12, 13.) Likewise the presumptuous wretches who are offering salvation to sinners, and pretending to be commissioned to aid in the conversion of sinners, are by the apostle Jude denominated, "Clouds without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked

up by the roots.” - Jude 12. Being twice dead, they cannot contain any of the water of life which they pretend to offer to their deluded hearers. Peter says of them, “These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest; to whom the mist of darkness is reserved forever.” - 2 Peter ii. 17. When the children of Israel were in the wilderness and without water, they were in a dying condition, until God commanded, and Moses smote the rock which was in Horeb; thence from the rock the water flowed in streams of salvation. In this figure, Paul says, “And that Rock was Christ.” God, according to what we have quoted from Jeremiah, is the Fountain of living water, and God was manifest in the flesh of Christ, when he was smitten by the rod of Moses, and the waters of salvation broke forth, to follow all his redeemed family to their journey’s end. Isaiah says of Zion, the city of our solemnities, “But there, [in Zion] the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, [or instruments to draw with,] neither shall gallant ship pass thereby.” - Isaiah xxxiii. 21. This is that river of which David sung, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. (Psalm xlvi. 4.) It was seen by Ezekiel, proceeding from the threshold of the sanctuary of God, of which God said to the prophet, “And it shall come to pass that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live.” - Ezek. xlvii. 1-9. John also had a pleasing view of it: “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.” - Rev. xxii. 1. Of these waters God has said, “The beasts of the field shall honor me; the dragons and the owls; because I give waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert; to give drink to my people my chosen. - Isaiah xliii. 20. “When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in

high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." - Isaiah xli. 17, 18. "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be." - Zech.xiv. 8.

2. We may also speak of the cleansing quality of water as applicable to the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Although the carnal, depraved nature of man remains in his flesh, and keeps up a perpetual warfare in the children of grace, between the flesh and Spirit, the old man and the new man; yet it is certain that the grace of God, developed in his children, will produce a reformation. They cease to fight against the truth, and they no longer feel opposed to God's people, to his method of grace and salvation, but the things which they once hated they are made to love, and the society in which they had no pleasure or interest, now becomes the society of their choice.

3. The harmonizing, mingling, or unity of waters, is well calculated to set forth the unity of the Spirit as it is manifested in the saints of God. Let two who are born of the water and of the Spirit, come together, the one from Hindostan or Africa, and the other from a more refined part of the world, however hostile to each other in all their natural prejudices, as soon as they pronounce the *Shibboleth,* or manifest that they have both drank of that living water which is in them as wells of water, springing up into everlasting life, all their prejudices melt away, and they come together as two drops of water, and are of one heart and one mind.

Second. We proposed to notice the purposes of God, as implied in our text, to give this water to some, but not to all the sons of men. The words, He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, fully imply that there

are those unto whom he will give it. But we do not depend upon any logical deductions, or mere inferences however clearly deduced, but on the most positive and emphatic declarations of the word of God. First we will present the testimony of the Redeemer himself, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." - John v. 25. This passage most positively declares not only a fixed and irrevocable purpose, but also a pledge in which the veracity of Christ is involved, that some who are dead shall hear his voice and live; but whether all the dead or only some of the dead are included, must be ascertained from other portions of the word. To determine this matter, turn to the tenth chapter, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, and there we are informed who of the dead shall so hear and live. "MY sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." But perhaps a more direct declaration could not be expressed in our language, than that found in the appeal made by our Lord, to the Father, when he "lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." - John xvii. 1-3. But to settle the matter forever beyond all cavil, turn to his words in John vi. 37, 44,45, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." As the water which Christ shall give, is the water of life, or living water, we see that those

only are partakers of it, who are drawn by the Father, taught by God, quickened by the voice of the Son of God, and these being quickened, are qualified to appreciate the waters of life, because they, and only they, are capable of thirsting for living water. And the thirsty only are called to the waters. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," cries the inspired Isaiah. (lv. 1.) To which Christ himself responds, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." As none but quickened sinners are thirsty, none but the thirsty are called, and as none but such as are drawn by the Father can come to the place of these "broad rivers and streams," so all who are so drawn shall come, shall live, shall in no wise be cast out, but shall be raised up at the last day. All therefore who know the gift of God, and who the Savior is, will ask of him, for they being taught of God, have learned that God alone is in Christ, and that all the waters of life are in him, therefore it is that they shall come to him, and that they shall ask for him, and he shall give, not offer, to them the waters of life freely, not conditionally, and the water which he shall give them shall be in them. We now come to our last general proposition, which is,

Thirdly. To speak of the lasting and blessed effects of this living water to all those unto whom Christ shall give it. He shall never thirst, but it shall be in him a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. That he shall never thirst, does not mean that christians do not thirst after God, holiness, happiness, &c., in the sense in which the psalmist expressed in Psalm xlii. 12, "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God," also Psalm cxliii., "I stretch forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee as a thirsty land." But the peculiar sense in which the figure is employed in our text, is that they who receive from Christ the water of life which he shall give them, shall never be deprived of it, for it shall be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Christ, who is the fountain, is himself in them, and from that

living fountain the waters of life shall be ever springing up. Of this life which is called water, it is said, “God hath given us eternal life and the life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not.” - 1 John v. 12. Hence Paul, in describing the difference between this living water and that which hath to be DRAWN with human instrumentalities, says, “But the righteousness which of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend up into heaven, that is to bring Christ down from above, or who shall descend into the deep, that is to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart, that is the word of faith which we preach.” - Rom. x. 6-8. This well being in them, and the waters of life springing up in their hearts, moves their lips to proclaim his goodness, and to talk of his power. Water may be conducted by pipes to any depth and then elevated to a level with its fountain head; but, without some other power or agency, it can never rise above its own level or fountain. Hence the water, or life, which may be obtained by workmongers who fancy that they have something to draw with, will never elevate them above themselves, as the fountain from whence they draw the life of their religion, is in the passions, will, resolutions and determinations of their own carnal nature, it will rise no higher than themselves. But the water of life which Jesus gives, is clear as crystal, and proceeds forth from the throne of God and the Lamb, it therefore is springing up into everlasting life. However dark and disconsolate the children of God may feel, all their trials are wisely appointed for the trial of their faith, and in every other respect, for their good and the glory of God, and the more they are exercised by the springing up of these living waters within them, the more they may expect to see and feel, and mourn their own carnal, depraved nature, and the more they may expect to be tempted by the adversary. But this rather proves the existence in them of the well of water, than otherwise. But it

is consoling to be assured by our Lord Jesus Christ himself that all unto whom this water is given, are secured forever, and shall never be deprived of that life which he gives to them, and which he is in them. They shall in that sense never thirst, because he has given them eternal life and they shall never perish.

What we have written we cheerfully submit to the criticism of all who wish to criticise, as we have no motive other than the advancement of the truth; if anything shall be found in our views which is not fully sustained by the Scriptures, let it be rejected. Prove all things, and hold fast only to that which is good.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 66 – 75

JOHN 5:29.

Very Dear and much esteemed Brother Beebe: It seems that I cannot do without your comforting paper, as I am situated where I cannot hear the Old School Baptists preach, or but very seldom see one of them. Will you please give your views on John 5:29. Some time ago this text got hold of my mind and seemed to worry me very much. "And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." I seemed to be fully impressed that I had done nothing that is truly good; but I have done evil all my days.

Yours in much tribulation.
Hargis Farthing.
Newbern, N.C.
February 20, 1869.

Reply: In speaking of the children of God, Christ has pledged his word that he will raise them up to life and immortal glory at the last day. The Scriptures frequently distinguish them from others, as in this text, as they that have done good, which is to us an *evidence,* but not the *cause* of their salvation. As it is said, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Whereas, neither their believing or being baptized is the cause of their salvation; nor their unbelief the cause of their damnation; but in both cases it is the evidence. Faith in Christ and obedience to his precepts give reliable evidence of being born of God, while unbelief and ungodly works are evidence of a state of condemnation.

Hence, in the vision of John, Revelation 20, he saw all the dead stand before God, and they were judged out of those things which were written in the books, and whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of

fire. Yet they were all judged, “every man according to his works.” The resurrection, judgment and final destiny shall be precisely according to, but not resulting from, their works; for they are judged out of those things which are written in the books. All whose names are in the book of the Lamb were there written from the foundation of the world. See Revelation 13:8, and 17:8. And they are “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10. “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:12,13. “Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.” Isaiah 26:12.

From these Scriptures it is abundantly manifest that the works which correspond with the eternal records of the books out of which all the dead, both small and great, are judged before God, are the works which God has wrought in us, and has before ordained that we shall walk in them, and to secure the performance of which God himself works in us, both to will and to do. Hence in the absence of good works, thus defined, we lack reliable evidence that our names are in the Lamb’s Book of Life. No human or saving merit can be attributed to our good works, for they are but the development of what God has wrought in us. And we are expressly and repeatedly told in God’s sacred word of truth that the saints are saved by grace, not by works, lest any man should boast. “By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Titus 3:5. Inasmuch, therefore, as God has before ordained that all his saved people shall walk in good works, and he himself has wrought all these good works in them, and worketh in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, we can find no evidence that any are his

children in whom these works of God do not appear, and wherever they do appear they are known as the effect, and not as the cause, of our salvation. Just as the good fruit of a tree is the evidence that the tree is good, and not the cause of its goodness. In all who are born of the Spirit, God has wrought the works of repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, with fervent aspirations after holiness, and a loathing of the sins and pollution of their vile nature, the works of love and the law of Christ. And although, like our brother Farthing, and like the apostle Paul, they can find nothing good existing in or emanating from their earthly nature, but groan, being burdened with, and long to be delivered from the body of this death, they are, nevertheless, standing fully justified before God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of his righteousness, they have the righteousness of the law of God fulfilled in them, by him who has saved them from their sins, and brought in for them everlasting righteousness, and they shall be raised up at the last day in the resurrection of life.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 484 – 486

JOHN V. 40.

Elder Beebe: Will you oblige a friend by giving through the columns of your paper, your views on John v. 40? which reads as follows: “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” Is not coming to Christ set forth as a condition, the fulfillment of which is requisite to the attainment of the life here mentioned? And can we not reasonably infer that by coming unto him aright, they whom he addressed might have secured this life? And lastly, does not the power of refusing to come unto Christ, herein attributed to his auditors, imply also the possession, on their part, of the power to come unto him?

ALPHA.

Reply: We cannot in this number afford the amount of space which a full discussion of this subject requires, embracing as it does substantially the grand issues contested by the advocates of the truth of God on the one hand, and the champions of human power and free agency on the other. This has been the grand point of religious controversy ever since sin entered into the world. The doctrine of the ability of man to stretch forth his hands and help himself to the fruit of the tree of life, and eat and live forever, was first insinuated in the garden of Eden by the devil, and was fully implied by his words to Eve, “Thou shalt not surely die,” and that insinuation was acted out in the transgression of Adam and Eve, and still more fully exemplified by Cain, when he presented the fruits of his own labor, and production of the earth which then groaned under the curse of Jehovah, as a ground of acceptance before God. All the errors and delusions which have prevailed on the subject of religion, from that period to the present, were amply set forth in the type, as Jude declares of all who pervert the truth, “Woe unto

them, for they have gone in the way of Cain.” - Jude 11. Cain’s way was the very opposite of God’s way, which was signified in the offering of a lamb, which directed the faith of Abel to the Lamb of God, as the only offering which could perfect forever them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.

The carnal, unregenerate Jews, to whom Christ addressed the words of our text, were in the way of Cain, looking for acceptance with God on the grounds of their own works, while they had not the word of God abiding in them, by which all who are born again are quickened, “Of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord which liveth and abideth forever.” These Jesus knew had not that living word in them, therefore they were destitute of eternal life. And yet they thought they had eternal life in the Scriptures. The Scriptures which they had, and in which they believed that they had eternal life, were the Old Testament Scriptures, for the New Testament was not at that time in the hands of mortals, and as they relied on the law or Old Testament for life, they were admonished to search that record, for instead of affording assurance that they had life in the law, or in their works of obedience to the law, all that was written in the law, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, (which comprised all of their Scriptures) was written concerning Christ, as he told the two disciples immediately after his resurrection, and as he told these Jews in connection with the words of our text, “They,” namely, the Scriptures in which they thought they had eternal life, “are they which testify of me.” “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” Christ is life. “This is the true God and eternal life.” But as Paul bore record of his kindred according to the flesh, that “they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, [which is Christ] and going about to establish their own righteousness,” which in another place he says is by the law, or by their own works, they thereby rejected the righteousness of God. Just so in regard to Christ,

as the life and immortality of his body, the church, the Jews saw in him no attraction to draw or incline them to him; he was to them as a root out of dry ground, in whom they saw no form or comeliness. All this was, as he told them in the connection, because his word or life was not in them, and no man, either Jew or Gentile, ever had a will to come to Christ for life, until they were quickened by the indwelling of the word of God. None are willing until the day of Christ's power, for it is God that worketh in his people, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Having made these preliminary remarks we will now attend to the interrogatives stated by Alpha.

1. *Is not coming to Christ set forth as a condition, the fulfillment of which is requisite to the attainment of the life here mentioned?* We answer most emphatically, it is not. In the connection, as we have already noticed, Christ is not offering to make a bargain or contract with these carnal Jews, nor is he making proposals to them, nor stating terms and conditions, overtures, nor offers of any kind whatever. But he is simply defending himself from the aspersions and blasphemies which the Jews had uttered against him, and in doing so he uncovers the hypocrisy and dishonesty of his accusers, proving that the word of life is not in them, or in other words, that they were in a carnal, unregenerate state, by two conclusive evidences, namely, their unbelief in him, and their indisposition to come to him for life. If they were truly the children of God, as they professed to be, they would believe on him. That Jesus spake of their unbelief, as a testimony that they were not what they pretended to be, is very evident from many expressions. "And ye have not his word in you; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." - Verse 38. This was a conclusive evidence that they were not born of God, for he said, "But ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep; as I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." - John x. 26, 27. The faith that accompanies salvation is a fruit of the Spirit, and is

implanted in the incorruptible seed which produces a new and spiritual birth. Therefore he said, “Verily, verily I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.” - John v. 24. None therefore believe on him until they are passed from death unto life; consequently faith cannot precede life, nor be a condition on the performance of which life is to be obtained. This then, as we have said, is one conclusive evidence that the Jews, unto whom our text was addressed, were ungodly and unregenerated men.

Another evidence, equally as conclusive, is given in our text: “Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.” For he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, &c. And without faith it is impossible to please God. Now, as no man can have faith or believe in Christ until he has eternal life in him, and as without that faith and belief in Christ, none have any will, desire or inclination to turn away from the works of the law, to look for life in Jesus Christ, the fact that these unbelieving Jews had no will or disposition to look to Jesus Christ for life and immortality, was another evidence that they had not passed from death unto life.

In further demonstration of the correctness of our position, that coming to Christ is not set forth in our text, or anywhere else in the Scriptures, as a condition, &c., we quote the words of our Lord in this same chapter, John v. 21, “For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” This text fully defines the manner in which Christ quickens or gives life to the dead, and it is in a way just as independent of conditions, means, instrumentalities and human agencies, as is the resurrection of the dead, so that if we conclude that any willing or doing of the sinner is required as a condition, on the performance of which eternal life is to be attained, we shall be compelled

to also believe that the inanimate tenents of the graves will be required to comply with some conditions, or remain in their graves unresurrected for evermore. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, &c., even so the Son quickeneth. And the manner of both is clearly stated in the same chapter, verses 25-29, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth,” &c. The quickening and resurrection of them who are in the graves will be effected in the same way that the heavens and the earth were created; the voice of God, who said, Let them be made, and they were made, without any previous means - using on the part of the things which were called forth into existence by the voice of God. So in the resurrection, The Lord shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, and the voice of the archangel and the trump of God shall sound, and the dead shall be raised, and all this without any previous arrangements or agency of the dead. And the giving of spiritual life to dead sinners, and their passage from death unto life, Jesus says, is even so. But if the Father raiseth up the bodies of the dead by his own almighty power, independently of any performance on their part, and the Son of God quickeneth dead sinners, on their performance of certain conditions, then the one would not be even as the other, but there would be a very striking contrast. Still another demonstration of our position is found in the express declaration of the Holy Ghost, Romans ix. 16, “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Now if the words of the Redeemer, “And ye will not come unto me, that ye might have life,” imply that either their willing or their running or coming to Christ, were

conditions, the performance of which was requisite to the attainment of that life, then Paul was mistaken, and is found a false and unreliable witness of God unto us. If life is attained by our willing and acting, why has the Holy Ghost, by Paul, told us in just so many words that it is not so?

Once more. If eternal life and salvation is obtained by anything that men can will or do to secure it, then it is by works, and if it is by works, it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work. But the Arminian is effectually headed off at this point, for God, by the apostle, has emphatically declared, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." - Eph. ii. 8-10.

The second interrogative of Alpha seems to imply that there are more ways than one of coming to Christ. He asks, *And can we not reasonably infer that by coming to him aright, they whom he addressed might have secured this life?* We find no such discrimination in the text, nor is there anything in the book of God to favor the idea that there is a right and a wrong way. Christ has declared emphatically, "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." - John xiv. 6. It is totally impossible that this text can imply a possibility for any man in an unquickened state to come to Christ without a palpable contradiction of what he has said, John vi. 44, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." The total inability of all men to come to Christ by any power of will or works that they possess in their lost and helpless state, or until drawn by the Father, is so plainly written that none but infidels will dare to deny it. The power to bring them to Christ is in God, even the Father, and they are unable to move

towards Christ until God the Father exerts that power which is exclusively in him. And whenever and wherever God the Father exerts that sovereign power, and draws a sinner to Christ, Christ has pledged his word that he will raise up that sinner at the last day. And this drawing power shall assuredly be exerted in all who are ordained to eternal life, for Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." - John vi. 37. The apostle John testifies to the church of God, that this is the record that God hath given us (the saints) eternal life, and this life is in his Son; he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." And Paul testifies that this life is hid with Christ in God, and also that Jesus Christ, who is the only and blessed Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, only hath immortality (or eternal life) dwelling in the light, *which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen nor can see,* to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen. (1 Tim. vi. 16.)

The third and last interrogative of Alpha reads thus, *And lastly, does not the power of refusing to come unto Christ, herein attributed to his auditors, imply also the possession, on their part, of the power to come unto him?* As there is nothing either said or implied in the text about his auditors refusing to come to him, we shall only treat it as a baseless quibble. In the whole subject our Lord has denied the claims of these carnal, workmongrel Jews, to the possession of eternal life, and proved their destitution of that life by their utter destitution of either will or power to come to him for life. He neither says nor implies that that life had ever been offered to them, or that they had refused it, for it has never been offered either to them or to any other beings in earth or heaven. It is nowhere called an offer, but he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give [not offer] to them eternal life, and they shall never

perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.” - John x. 27.

In conclusion we will say to our unknown querist, Alpha, we have complied with your request; read what we have written candidly, compare our views with the Scriptures of truth, especially those portions of the Scriptures to which we have referred, and if you can finally manage to keep the doctrine of free will and human ability upon the throne, in your judgment, we shall be compelled to regard you as occupying the same position which was occupied by the carnal, workmongrel Jews, who had neither the will nor the ability to come to Christ, that they might have life, who, in their ignorance of God’s righteousness, were going about to establish their own righteousness, a righteousness from which we must be delivered or perish forever.

Middletown, N. Y.
August 1, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 123 - 130

JOHN V. 40.

“And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

Our Lord was in discussion with the Jews, who professed a sacred regard for the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and for all the requisitions of the law which was given to their fathers; but they rejected Christ as the true Messiah which was to come. They had charged him with a desecration of their Sabbath day. Christ asserted his power not only to heal the sick, but also to raise the dead, and judge the world, and claimed that his honor and glory was identical with that of his Father, so that he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father, for he and the Father are one. He also referred them to the testimony that his Father bore of him, and to the testimony of John, and the works which he wrought, and finally to the Scriptures on which they professed to rely as the infallible truth of God, and in the preceding verse, he said to the Jews, “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.”

From this Scripture and its connection, as well as from all other parts of the Scriptures, we are clearly taught that no external evidence presented to the natural intellect of man, can possibly make men savingly acquainted with our Lord Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, and the only Savior of lost, helpless sinners. These Jews were exalted to heaven in regard to their opportunities, and, as he had frequently reminded them, they had been more highly favored in regard to external evidence than any other nation or people under heaven. To them pertained the giving of the law; to them the Scriptures were given; to them all the prophets had been sent; to them John the Baptist had come in the Spirit and in the power of Elijah. To their shepherds the angelic

messengers had brought down from heaven the news of his wonderful birth in Bethlehem; to them he had personally come in the flesh, in precise agreement with all the predictions of their prophets, and in harmony with all the types and shadows of their law. In their hearing he had spoken as never man spake, preached as never man preached; in their presence he had healed the sick, cast out devils, raised the dead, and performed many wonderful works; but with all this mighty array of testimony before their eyes, they could not regard him in his true character, as the fountain and source of life and immortality, or they would come to him for life, instead of seeking to be justified by their own works. If these Jews, with all the testimony which was presented to their natural understanding, were still destitute of saving faith in him, how preposterous that Gentile sinners, with more limited opportunities, should become more savingly acquainted with him, as the true God, and eternal Life, without a special revelation of him to them as such, by the Father. “No man knoweth the Son but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal him.” These Jews, as we see, were as destitute of will as they were of power to come to Jesus for life, for they neither possessed the ability or disposition to look to him for life and salvation. As to their will, they thought they had eternal life secured to them in the Scriptures, inasmuch as they understood the Scriptures to signify that salvation was of the Jews, and like all Arminians of every other age, their will was enlisted in the vain hope of being justified by the deeds of the law, and to inherit eternal life as a consideration for works of righteousness which they had done, or intended to do. Therefore they had no disposition, inclination, desire or will to look to him, or come to him, that they might have life. Another evidence that they had not the will was, they did not believe that he had power to give eternal life to any of the children of men; for they did not believe on him as the Son of God. Furthermore, they saw no necessity of coming to him

for life, as he had just told them, they thought they had eternal life in the Scriptures. They had mistaken that temporal life, which was promised to the children of Israel on condition of their obedience to the law, for eternal life, and claimed that they were Abraham's children, and never in bondage, and hence they spurned the idea of being made free. The reason why they had not the will to come to him for life, is very clearly stated in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses of this chapter. Speaking of the Father who had sent him, and who had borne witness of him, he said to them, "Ye have not heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you, for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." They could have no will to come to Jesus, as the only Savior, unless God worked in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

We are aware that many are taught that sinners, in a state of unregeneracy, are only deficient in their inclination, and that if by moral suasion their natural minds could be convinced by argument, or otherwise, that it would be to their interest to come to Christ, their wills would yield, and there would be no other impediment in their way. Allowing this theory to be true, there would be no need of a Christ to save a sinner at all. Every intelligent being knows that the human will of man is accessible to the power of man; and if nothing more were required than a change of will, the selfishness of man may be successfully appealed to by the eloquence of revivalists, and their carnal will enlisted to be happy here and hereafter, and if this were all the difficulty, the work would then be done. But this idea conflicts not only with the Scriptures, but also with the experience of every quickened sinner. Every subject of grace will testify that when their blind eyes were opened to discover their sinful state, they were not only willing, but would have given worlds, if they possessed them, to see a way possible for them to be saved without a sacrifice of the justice and truth of God. This is what filled them with deep

despair, not that they were unwilling to be saved; but that there were impediments in the way which none but God was able to remove. They knew that they could not be saved in their sins, and the knew not how they could be saved from their sins. Nor could this difficulty be removed from them, until Christ was revealed to them as their Savior. They then felt they knew, and they confessed that their salvation was wholly of the Lord, from first to last, that it was not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy. But to settle this point eternally, Christ has declared, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." - John vi. 44. The caviling of Arminians, that the Father draws every one of the human family, is silenced by the declaration that Christ will raise him up at the last day all that are drawn by the Father to him. And in the thirty-seventh verse of this same chapter he says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." This settles the matter effectually and forever. The emphatic testimony of Christ himself is an end of all controversy with all who fear God. We cannot honor the Father except we honor the Son, and certainly cannot honor the Son if we believe not his testimony on this, as well as on all other subjects.

That all unregenerate men are destitute of a will to come to Christ that they might have life, is certain from the testimony of the Scriptures, especially from the words of the Savior himself, and the reason why they are destitute of the will, is because his word abideth not in them; and the reason why his word abideth not in them is, because they are not "Born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." - 1 Peter i. 23. And, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." - 1 John iii. 9. "Of his own will begat he us,

with the word of truth." - James i. 18. The testimony is not, That of our own will begat he us, by the word of our power. But it is just as our blessed Redeemer has said, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." - John vi. 63. "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." - John v. 21. Here we have, in this last passage, an illustration of the manner in which the Son of God quickeneth whom he will. How does the Father raise the dead? Does he wait until the dead are willing to come to him for life? Does he promise to the slumbering tenants of the graves, that if they are willing he will raise them and quicken, or give them life? Certainly not. "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, [not with a proposition, a proffer, or an invitation, but] with the voice of the arch-angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." - 1 Thess. iv. 16. "We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised." - 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52. "Even so," or exactly so, precisely so, "the Son quickeneth whom he will." Will-worshipers, free-agents, and all Arminians, in whom the word of life does not abide, may, with the Jews, rage and blaspheme, but helpless sinners saved by grace, will exclaim in the fullness of their enraptured spirit, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are all thy ways, thou King of saints." "We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty; which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." - Rev. xv. 3, & xi. 17.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 209 - 214

JOHN V. 40.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: – Please give your views on John v. 40, and oblige your weak brother,

JOHN DARBROW.
Eagle Station, Ky., Dec. 14, 1880.

REPLY. – The text on which we are desire to give our views, reads thus: "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." This chapter, as well as all other parts of the sacred scriptures, testifies of the utter inability of man to approach unto God by any power or ability which they possess in or of themselves. In the next chapter Jesus says positively to the same unbelieving Jews, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him." Evidently implying that the same power and grace which was required to provide and send the Savior into the world is indispensably requisite to bring a sinner to Jesus for salvation. This declaration is substantially repeated by our Lord in the same connection, John vi. 44 and 65. "And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

These scriptures, with many others, prove beyond all contradiction the total inability of all men to come to Jesus, except by the special gift and drawing of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. And the text on which we are requested to give our views, is equally positive and conclusive in proving that man, in his natural state is equally as destitute of a will or desire to come to him for salvation as they are of power. They have neither the will nor the ability to come to Jesus, that they might have life. It is very true that all who come to him have life, but it is equally true that those unbelieving Jews to whom these words were spoken, thought they had eternal life in the scriptures, which were

then extant, the law and the prophets, and being of the works of the law and under the curse, disdained the humiliating thought of coming to Jesus for that life which they thought was already secure to them by their descent from Abraham, and their obedience to the precepts of the law of a carnal commandment. Like the Pharisees of the present time, they ignored the doctrine of salvation by grace, and through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But although "no man," not one of the all the race of Adam, has either the ability or the will to come to Jesus that they might have life, Jesus has positively declared that, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Those whom the Father has given to Christ, are not left to the volition of their own will, nor to the exertion of human power, for it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. – Phil. ii. 13.

All who are drawn by the Father to Jesus and made willing in the day of his power, are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, and they shall never perish nor be cast out, for the eternal truth of God has said, I will raise them up at the last day, while all who are left to live and die under the delusion that they have the power in themselves to come to Jesus, and secure eternal life by their own will or works, die in their sins, and all their works shall perish with them.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 6
March 15, 1881

JOHN X. 2, 3.

AGREEABLY to the request of brother Robbins, on another page, we will offer some remarks upon that part of our Lord's parable embraced in the passage proposed for consideration, viz.: "But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep; to him the porter openeth, and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out." In perfect harmony with predictions going before, Jesus "Opened his mouth in parables, and uttered dark sayings;" and while unto his disciples it was given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, unto them that are without, all these things were uttered in parables, for without a parable he spake not to them. This course was well adapted to the execution of the design of God, whose pleasure it is to hide these things from the wise and prudent and reveal them unto babes. The wisdom and prudence of men would rather dictate the opposite course, and instead of purposely concealing the things of the Spirit from the understanding of the great and learned, the wise and the noble, it would seek by moral suasion, lucid argument, conclusive demonstration, &c., to persuade men of influence and talent to embrace the gospel. Had our blessed Redeemer intended to court the favor or applause of those who move in the higher circles of human society, he might have used human policy, and adapted his discourse to their taste and capacity, as the worldly taught preachers of our age do; but then their faith would stand in the wisdom of this world, and not in the power of God. – 1 Cor. ii. 5.

God's peculiar people are in various parts of the scriptures called sheep; and this figurative appellation is given them as the children of God, in distinction from the rest of mankind, who are designated goats. "All we like sheep have gone astray," says the prophet, Isa. liii. 6, "and the Lord has laid on him (Christ) the iniquity of us all." Of these strayed sheep.

the same prophet has said, “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm and carry them in his bosom.” – Isa. xl. 2. And the inspired psalmist says, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” – Psalm. xxiii. 1. And in connection with the parable under consideration, Christ announces himself the good Shepherd, that layeth down his life for the sheep. Hence we have the testimony of Christ himself that the redeemed, or those for whom he died, are his sheep; that they were not only sheep, but they were *his sheep*, before they went astray, and that they were the objects for whom alone he laid down his life. Much might be said on the appropriateness of the figure, but to trace its analogy would swell our article to too great an extent. In the course of this chapter Christ speaks of two distinct sheep-folds: the one is that into which he as the Shepherd of Israel has entered by the door for the purpose of bringing out his own sheep and the other, that into which he will fold all his redeemed when there shall be but one fold and one shepherd. The carnal tribes of the family of Abraham, under their legal covenant, were a fold in which many of the sheep which he came to redeem were4held in bondage. “For this Agar is Mt. Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” – Gal. iv. 25, 26. The son differeth nothing from the servant until the time appointed of the Father. And this was evidently the case with those “lost sheep of the house of Israel,” which Christ the Shepherd came to seek and to save. He for this purpose entered into the fold where they were confined, *by the door*, for the purpose of effecting their emancipation; and as the anti-type of Cyrus, of whom it was written, “Thus saith the Lord thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself; that frustrateth the tokens of the liars, and maketh diviners mad; that turneth

wise men backward, and maketh their knowledge foolish; that confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers; that saith to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be inhabited, and to the cities of Judah, Ye shall be built, and I will raise up the decayed places thereof; that saith to the deep, Be dry, and I will dry up all thy rivers; that saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure; even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundations shall be laid. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates, and the gates shall riot be shut: I will go before thee arid make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron," &c. – Isa. xliv. 24-28, and xlv. 1, 2.

As in the execution of the word of the Lord, Cyrus acted as the Lord's chosen shepherd iii delivering his captive people from their bondage, and in leading them out of Babylon, and in the re-establishment of Jerusalem, and in the building of the second temple, which was more glorious than the first, he was evidently Sb far a type of Christ: even so God has proclaimed his Son as his Shepherd, arid the man that is his fellow. – Zech. xiii. 7. As God went before Cyrus to break in pieces the gates of brass, arid cut in sunder the bars of iron, and to open before him the two-leaved gates which were closed upon captive Israel, so the right hand of Christ in the deliverance of his people from the wrath and condemnation of the law, was upheld by the omnipotence of his eternal power and Godhead. Cyrus entered Babylon by the gates, and the palace of Belshazar by the door; for God had said unto the deep, Be dry, and the proud waters had retreated from their accustomed channel, and the army of Cyrus entered the city under the walls, and the guard or porter opened the gates of the city to him; and according to the

word of the Lord these gates could not be again closed against God's redeemed people. "But he that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep." Christ in entering the fold, or place of his children's captivity, may be considered as having entered by the door, in reference to the prophecies going before. He came as it was written of him in the volume of the book, to do the will of God. "A body," said he, "hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sins thou hast had no pleasure." "Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." – Heb. x. 5, 6. Secondly, he came in by the door to the place where his sheep were folded, when he was made of a woman, made under the law; for it was a carnal or fleshly covenant that his sheep of that fold were under; "The children being partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." – Heb. ii. 14-17. The captivity and bondage of God s people was in the relation in which they stood to Adam. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation," &c. – Rom. 5. 18. And the Jewish covenant embraced a carnal or fleshly people, related to Abraham by being born in his house or bought with his money, and their covenant contained also carnal ordinances and a worldly sanctuary. – Heb. ix. 1. To effect their deliverance from that bondage, to emancipate them from that fold and from that government, he must needs be made flesh and dwell among them, he must be made like them in all points, and yet be without sin; and

although like them in point of humanity, yet holy, harmless and separate from sinners.

"For he who could for sin atone,
Must have no blemish of his own."

Although he had no sin, he was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God through him.

3d. He entered by the door, agreeably to his explanation of the door of his sheep-fold. "I am the door," he says, and by himself he has fulfilled the law, cancelled its demands, borne its penalty, suffered the vials of almighty wrath, poured out his soul unto death, descended into the grave, encountered the king of terrors on his own dominions, despoiled hint of his sting, and the grave of victory. "Not by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." – Heb. ix. 12. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it up again, so that by himself he was able to enter. This was a *new* way, a living way of entrance, and the Shepherd who entered by the door is himself the way, and no man can come unto God but by him.

To him the porter openeth. If, by the law, his captive sheep were held in the prison-house Of death, Divine Justice was the porter who kept the door. No bribe could tempt him, no pity move him; he was inexorable. But to Jesus even this inflexible porter opened, and without expense, for Jesus met his full demands, and Justice asked no more. The brazen gates of death were unsealed; the massy bars of death were cut in sunder.

To him the porter has not only opened the door of death, and the grave, but he has opened to him the portals of immortal glory. Not only have the gates of death been opened to

receive hi as the ransom of his people, but they have been opened to deliver him up, for it was impossible that he should be holden of death. Having done and suffered all that law could demand, or justice could inflict, he has now entered into the inner court of the temple by his own blood. He has commanded, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in! Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle.” – Psalm xxiv. 8, 9.

But again: In the testimony of the Son of God, (1 John 5. 6) we are informed that Christ came by water and blood; not by water only, but by water and blood; and it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

We have shown in the foregoing remarks, that Jesus by his own blood has entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, and by reference to Matt. iii. and last clause of the fifteenth verse, where the porter opened the door to Christ in regard to this witness. When Jesus came into the sheep-fold, or palace*, the Spirit, in bodily shape like a clove, designated him as the Son of God. And lo, a voice from heaven was heard, saying, “This is my be loved Son in whom I am well pleased.” This Baptist porter opened the watery door to the Shepherd of the sheep, because “Thus it became them to fulfill all righteousness.”

And the sheep hear his voice. As he had promised by the mouth of the prophet, “I will cause my glorious voice to be heard, and will shew the letting down of my arm,” &c. He has verified the promise not only in causing his voice to be uttered, but he causeth it to be heard, by giving ears to the deaf, and life to the dead. “The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” – John 5. 22. Although dead in trespasses and sins, he gives unto them eternal life and they

shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand. But by the sheep hearing his voice we are under stand something more than to hear what he says; they give the same evidence that they hear his voice, that sheep do when they are called by their shepherd, they follow him. The voice of Jesus as the Shepherd and Bishop of souls is sounded in the gospel, and all the sheep recognize the gospel as the well-known voice of Jesus; but others believe not, because they are not his sheep, as he said unto them.

And he calleth his own sheep by name. He has their names all written in his book of life from the foundation of the world, and the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. He is therefore at a loss in calling them. He knew among the Jews who were the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and he knows equally well all his sheep among the Gentiles, which were not of the Jewish fold. He is not liable to the mistake which the arminians charge on him, of calling some that are not his own and endeavoring to make them his own; and of frequently failing in the enterprise. He says, "I know my sheep and am known of mine;" and he also knows who are not of his sheep: "For whom he did foreknow them he also did predestinate to be conformed to his image, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called," (he calleth them by name, and he makes them hear and understand and obey him) "and whom he called them he also justified; and whom he justified them he also glorified." He calls them with an holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began. – 2 Tim. i. 9. If he should call them ineffectually, that would not be a holy calling; for a calling that is holy cannot be defective – must secure the design of him who calls. His calls are not general, as arminians assert, but special and particular, addressed to his own sheep, and

these he calls by name, that there may be nothing indefinite in the vocation.

And leadeth them out. Christ was not only anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound, but also to bring his prisoners out of their prison houses. The porter having opened the door to him as the Shepherd and Leader of his people, he leadeth them out. In order to lead them out it was necessary that he should go into the prison house where they were: this he did when he was made under the law, and when he descended into the chambers of death. But his was an errand of mercy, and by death he destroyed him that had the power of death, which is the devil; and wrought deliverance for them who were all their lifetime subject to bondage. He leads in the fulfillment of all righteousness, in a perfect obedience to all the requisitions of the law of God. None had ever preceded him in this work. But going before he leads his people after him, in bringing them up to the utmost demands of the law, for he is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. He leads them out from the guilt and consequence of sin: being made sin for them, and having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, he has brought life and immortality to light, and leads them out of their state of sin and death, into life and immortality. This is fully demonstrated in his triumphant resurrection from the dead. He became the First Fruits of them that slept, and now holds in his hands the keys of hell and death. He giveth unto his sheep eternal life, and the assurance that they shall never perish. He leads them out from condemnation and into a state of justification – taking the lead in this also, for bearing the sins of his people he was numbered with the transgressors, and condemned by the law but having satisfied that law, he that was manifested in the flesh, and put to death in the flesh, was quickened and justified in the

Spirit, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory.

We have observed that Christ in coming into the Jewish fold, where he was sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel, was made flesh, made under the law, of the stock of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, and of the lineage of David; was circumcised, and became a debtor to the whole law, and in this body which was made of a woman he was put to death. The law could pursue him no farther. When, therefore, he arose from the dead, instead of returning to that same relation to the legal covenant, to the carnal family of Abraham, tribe of Judah, &c., he was in his resurrection manifested as the Son of God with power. And although he had been known, in these respects, after the flesh, yet we shall know him no more after the flesh.

"No more the cruel spear,
The cross and nails no more;
For death itself shakes at his name,
And all the heavens adore."

As the Forerunner of his people he has passed into the most holy place: "For Christ has not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." – Heb. ix. 24. In all this transition from death to life, from legal bondage to liberty, Christ is the Leader of his people and must be followed by them. Having removed the o1d tabernacle which was made with hands, and set up the true tabernacle which God has pitched and not man, and having abolished death, and nailed the hand-writing of ordinances which were against us to his cross, abolished the enmity, even the law of commandments, he has taken his seat upon the throne of his glory, and led the way for all his redeemed

to follow him, and they shall all return and come with singing unto Zion, and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which lie hath consecrated for us, through the vail, that is to say his flesh, and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promises; and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works." – Heb. x. 19-24.

* The Greek term from which in our version is translated sheep-fold, may also be rendered palace.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
July 1, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 283 – 292

JOHN X. 9.

Brother Beebe: Will you do me the favor to give your views on John x. 9, particularly on the latter clause of the verse?

ALEX HARRIS.
Malam, Texas, May 13, 1860.

Reply: The text on which we are requested to write, reads thus: "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." In the beginning of this chapter we have a parable which the Lord spake to the Pharisees, but they understood not what things they were which he spake to them. And what we have now under consideration appears to have been spoken in confirmation, and perhaps in explanation of the parable. In the preceding parable, we think our Lord was speaking of the Jewish *fold,* where his people were held under the legal covenant, and shut up, or held under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. Christ, as the good Shepherd, came to redeem them that were under the law, and to gather them with his arm, and to carry them in his bosom, according to Isaiah xl. 10. In their redemption it was needful that the Redeemer should come into the fold where they were, that is, that he should come under the law where they were shut up. The right of redemption was legally and exclusively in him. He had a right of property in the sheep; a prior, or previous claim. They were his property before they went astray; and it was his right therefore, and his alone, to redeem them. None who had ever come before him, to attempt the redemption of the sheep had any such right, and therefore their claims were never honored by the justice of God, which stood as sentinel, or porter at the door. "All," said Jesus, "that ever came before me, are thieves and robbers." If a flock of sheep belonging to A., should stray from his

premises on to the premises of B., and there commit such trespass as to warrant B. to hold them, for the damages done by them, and C. should come and offer to pay the charges of B. and take the sheep away, would not C. prove himself a dishonest man? Would not B. demand of C. to prove property as well as pay charges, before he would allow him to take the sheep away? None who have ever volunteered in the business of saving sinners, either before or since the coming of Christ, had any right of property in the sheep, and therefore they are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them, nor did the porter open to them; but all their efforts were illegal; they had not entered by the door, but had climbed up some other way; therefore, instead of delivering the sheep from the curse and dominion of the law, they had made it their business only to kill, and to destroy.

But when Jesus, the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep were, came, his title to them, and his right to redeem them, was fully recognized by the *porter,* or by that eternal justice which kept the door. Christ did not come to liberate the sheep illegally, though they were his own, by throwing down the fence, or by climbing up some other way; for he came not to destroy the law nor the prophets, but to fulfill: Heaven and earth shall pass away, he said, but not one jot or title shall pass from the law until all is fulfilled. Thus he entered into the fold lawfully, paid the utmost farthing of the demands of law and justice; opened the prison door to them that were bound; proclaimed liberty to captives; showed in what way the lawful captive could be delivered; called his own sheep by name, for he came to redeem none but his own, and that not to make them his, but because they were his. Well did he know their names: for he had a registry of them in his eternal book of life, and led them out.

And when he putteth forth *his own* sheep, he did not say to them, Now, as I have redeemed you from under the law, and ye are no more under it, you can go anywhere you please; follow your own inclinations, and walk in the light of your own eyes; but when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them; and he does not go and leave them, but they follow him, for he has the power of attraction for them in his voice, for they know his voice, but a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. Truly, Blessed are they who know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Where does he lead them? To the gospel fold. They trace his footsteps and follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth. He leads them in green pastures, by the still waters; for he is the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, and he shall feed them and lead them to fountains of living water. That is, having redeemed his people from the law, and delivered them from the old covenant, brought them experimentally out of the house of bondage, and out of the prison-house, he leads them to the gospel fold; to his church as set up under the new dispensation, where the pasture is rich and abundant, and where the waters of life flow clear as crystal from the throne of God and the Lamb, and where they shall feed and lie down, and where they shall have food and rest.

The Gospel Church, as organized on New Testament principles, under the reigning government of Christ, is what we understand to be the fold, of which Jesus himself is the only door for the sheep. Neither Abraham, nor Moses, nor circumcision, nor infant or adult sprinkling, nor will, nor works of men or angels, can afford an entrance to this fold of gospel fellowship and gospel privileges. Jesus says, most emphatically, “I am the door.” Not a door, as though there were others; for there is but the one entrance into the church of the living God. Except a man be born again, he cannot see

the kingdom of God, and except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the gospel fold. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by him. There is salvation in none other. No other name under heaven is given whereby we must be saved. And as he is the only door of salvation, or into the church, he says, “By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” How positive are his words. There is nothing in them made to rest upon contingencies, nothing uncertain.

He shall be saved. How cheering, truly, to the saints. They can rest upon the positive declaration of him who is himself the Truth. But, says the trembling saint, Have I truly entered by him as the door? Some indeed get into the church, or into religious profession, and are regarded as fellow citizens with the saints, and are treated as such, who have not entered by the door, but have climbed up some other way, but it is not said of such, They shall be saved, but it is said, They are thieves and robbers, who have come only to steal, to kill and to destroy. And we are also assured that every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

All who enter this fold without grace, shall be cast out without favor. How awfully important, then, that we know how we have entered. If it has not been by Christ, the door, it matters not how else we have managed to impose upon the saints. If by fasting and praying, by using means, or complying with terms; if by giving all our goods to feed the poor, or to fatten the missionaries; if by works of righteousness which we have done, or by the faith or works of pious parents, the prayers of revivalists, the pardon of popes, the confirmation of mitred bishops, or by anything but Christ, as the door, our characters are indelibly written, not sheep of Christ, but thieves and robbers. But to the fearful, trembling saint, let us inquire, Have you come into the church of God as a thief and a robber? Was your design to

steal, to kill, and to destroy? Did you come in by any other way than Christ, the door? Or, in other words, were you not cut completely off from every other hope but Christ alone? Were you not slain to every other hope for acceptance with God, and made to see, and feel, and to acknowledge that all your dependence was in Jesus Christ, and him crucified and risen from the dead? If so, then are ye the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. All such shall be saved; the mouth of God our Savior hath spoken it.

"Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God hath pledge his holiness."

"And shall go in and out, and find pasture." On this last clause our brother desires us more particularly to dwell. He shall go in and out of what? The Door. This is the use of a door. Doors to our houses are thus used; at them we go in and out. So when we contemplate the figure of a sheep-fold and pasturage ground. The careful shepherd provides for his flock to go into the fold for safety and comfort by night, and in the wintry and stormy seasons, where there are provisions for the comfort and security of the sheep.

But it would not promote the health, comfort or well being of the flock to be always housed up in the fold; but there are times when the skies are clear, the weather pleasant, the fields green, and the pasturage inviting, when the sheep desire to go out into the green pastures, where they may feed and lie down. It is natural for the sheep to require this. True, they can live on dry fodder, if kept in the fold continually, but they desire the change; they love to roam through the fields, drink of the still waters, lie down in the lovely and peaceful shade, when they know the good Shepherd's watchful eye is upon them, and that he is both able and determined to protect them from all harm. But

every well disciplined sheep knows that if he is suffered to go *out* into the green pasture, he must go there through Jesus, as the door. What sheep or lamb has ever enjoyed this privilege only through Jesus?

But it is not for the good of the flock to remain at all times and seasons in the fields which spread along the banks of the river of still waters. Here is where he causeth his sheep to rest at noon. But the chilling night comes on, the howling tempest rends the skies, the rain, and hail, and snow comes down, and they now require shelter; but where can they find it but in the fold, where they must pass under the rod to attain it? Still they are as dependent on Christ, as the door, for ingress, as they were for egress; as it is only through him they receive all their spiritual enjoyments, comforts and safety, both in the pasture and in the fold.

Brother Harris being a farmer, and in a sheep growing State, is doubtless familiar with the various figures used. A sheep-fold is a building used as a shelter and protection for sheep, but it is not to imprison them, only while their comfort and safety requires they shall be kept there, and when they go into it, it is not to make them sheep, but because they are sheep. And when they go out by the door, it is into the pasture which is provided for them. So the sheep of Jesus, who have entered by him, and all those other sheep which he has, which were not of the old Jewish fold, but which he has redeemed from the Gentiles; them also he must bring, and they shall hear his voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. And as the one flock of the good Shepherd, they shall by him go in and out, and find pasture.

This figure may also teach us that there are *set times* to favor Zion, when the saints are favored, through Christ, with peculiar enlargement of joy, peace and love, and when they can go forth and feed their kids, beside the fold, or

shepherd’s tents, and other times when their joys are restricted and they are directed to enter into the rock, or turn to their stronghold, until it shall be again announced to them, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone; the flowers appear in the earth, the time of the singing of birds has come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 393 - 398

JOHN X. 9.

Brother Beebe: Will you do me the favor to give your views on John x. 9, particularly on the latter clause of the verse?

ALEX HARRIS.
Malam, Texas, May 13, 1860.

Reply: The text on which we are requested to write, reads thus: "I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." In the beginning of this chapter we have a parable which the Lord spake to the Pharisees, but they understood not what things they were which he spake to them. And what we have now under consideration appears to have been spoken in confirmation, and perhaps in explanation of the parable. In the preceding parable, we think our Lord was speaking of the Jewish *fold,* where his people were held under the legal covenant, and shut up, or held under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. Christ, as the good Shepherd, came to redeem them that were under the law, and to gather them with his arm, and to carry them in his bosom, according to Isaiah xl. 10. In their redemption it was needful that the Redeemer should come into the fold where they were, that is, that he should come under the law where they were shut up. The right of redemption was legally and exclusively in him. He had a right of property in the sheep; a prior, or previous claim. They were his property before they went astray; and it was his right therefore, and his alone, to redeem them. None who had ever come before him, to attempt the redemption of the sheep had any such right, and therefore their claims were never honored by the justice of God, which stood as sentinel, or porter at the door. "All," said Jesus, "that ever came before me, are thieves and robbers." If a flock of sheep belonging to A., should stray from his

premises on to the premises of B., and there commit such trespass as to warrant B. to hold them, for the damages done by them, and C. should come and offer to pay the charges of B. and take the sheep away, would not C. prove himself a dishonest man? Would not B. demand of C. to prove property as well as pay charges, before he would allow him to take the sheep away? None who have ever volunteered in the business of saving sinners, either before or since the coming of Christ, had any right of property in the sheep, and therefore they are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not hear them, nor did the porter open to them; but all their efforts were illegal; they had not entered by the door, but had climbed up some other way; therefore, instead of delivering the sheep from the curse and dominion of the law, they had made it their business only to kill, and to destroy.

But when Jesus, the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep were, came, his title to them, and his right to redeem them, was fully recognized by the *porter,* or by that eternal justice which kept the door. Christ did not come to liberate the sheep illegally, though they were his own, by throwing down the fence, or by climbing up some other way; for he came not to destroy the law nor the prophets, but to fulfill: Heaven and earth shall pass away, he said, but not one jot or title shall pass from the law until all is fulfilled. Thus he entered into the fold lawfully, paid the utmost farthing of the demands of law and justice; opened the prison door to them that were bound; proclaimed liberty to captives; showed in what way the lawful captive could be delivered; called his own sheep by name, for he came to redeem none but his own, and that not to make them his, but because they were his. Well did he know their names: for he had a registry of them in his eternal book of life, and led them out.

And when he putteth forth *his own* sheep, he did not say to them, Now, as I have redeemed you from under the law, and ye are no more under it, you can go anywhere you please; follow your own inclinations, and walk in the light of your own eyes; but when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them; and he does not go and leave them, but they follow him, for he has the power of attraction for them in his voice, for they know his voice, but a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers. Truly, Blessed are they who know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance.

Where does he lead them? To the gospel fold. They trace his footsteps and follow the Lamb, whithersoever he goeth. He leads them in green pastures, by the still waters; for he is the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne, and he shall feed them and lead them to fountains of living water. That is, having redeemed his people from the law, and delivered them from the old covenant, brought them experimentally out of the house of bondage, and out of the prison-house, he leads them to the gospel fold; to his church as set up under the new dispensation, where the pasture is rich and abundant, and where the waters of life flow clear as crystal from the throne of God and the Lamb, and where they shall feed and lie down, and where they shall have food and rest.

The Gospel Church, as organized on New Testament principles, under the reigning government of Christ, is what we understand to be the fold, of which Jesus himself is the only door for the sheep. Neither Abraham, nor Moses, nor circumcision, nor infant or adult sprinkling, nor will, nor works of men or angels, can afford an entrance to this fold of gospel fellowship and gospel privileges. Jesus says, most emphatically, “I am the door.” Not a door, as though there were others; for there is but the one entrance into the church of the living God. Except a man be born again, he cannot see

the kingdom of God, and except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the gospel fold. He is the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by him. There is salvation in none other. No other name under heaven is given whereby we must be saved. And as he is the only door of salvation, or into the church, he says, “By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.” How positive are his words. There is nothing in them made to rest upon contingencies, nothing uncertain.

He shall be saved. How cheering, truly, to the saints. They can rest upon the positive declaration of him who is himself the Truth. But, says the trembling saint, Have I truly entered by him as the door? Some indeed get into the church, or into religious profession, and are regarded as fellow citizens with the saints, and are treated as such, who have not entered by the door, but have climbed up some other way, but it is not said of such, They shall be saved, but it is said, They are thieves and robbers, who have come only to steal, to kill and to destroy. And we are also assured that every plant that the heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up.

All who enter this fold without grace, shall be cast out without favor. How awfully important, then, that we know how we have entered. If it has not been by Christ, the door, it matters not how else we have managed to impose upon the saints. If by fasting and praying, by using means, or complying with terms; if by giving all our goods to feed the poor, or to fatten the missionaries; if by works of righteousness which we have done, or by the faith or works of pious parents, the prayers of revivalists, the pardon of popes, the confirmation of mitred bishops, or by anything but Christ, as the door, our characters are indelibly written, not sheep of Christ, but thieves and robbers. But to the fearful, trembling saint, let us inquire, Have you come into the church of God as a thief and a robber? Was your design to

steal, to kill, and to destroy? Did you come in by any other way than Christ, the door? Or, in other words, were you not cut completely off from every other hope but Christ alone? Were you not slain to every other hope for acceptance with God, and made to see, and feel, and to acknowledge that all your dependence was in Jesus Christ, and him crucified and risen from the dead? If so, then are ye the circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. All such shall be saved; the mouth of God our Savior hath spoken it.

"Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God hath pledge his holiness."

"And shall go in and out, and find pasture." On this last clause our brother desires us more particularly to dwell. He shall go in and out of what? The Door. This is the use of a door. Doors to our houses are thus used; at them we go in and out. So when we contemplate the figure of a sheep-fold and pasturage ground. The careful shepherd provides for his flock to go into the fold for safety and comfort by night, and in the wintry and stormy seasons, where there are provisions for the comfort and security of the sheep.

But it would not promote the health, comfort or well being of the flock to be always housed up in the fold; but there are times when the skies are clear, the weather pleasant, the fields green, and the pasturage inviting, when the sheep desire to go out into the green pastures, where they may feed and lie down. It is natural for the sheep to require this. True, they can live on dry fodder, if kept in the fold continually, but they desire the change; they love to roam through the fields, drink of the still waters, lie down in the lovely and peaceful shade, when they know the good Shepherd's watchful eye is upon them, and that he is both able and determined to protect them from all harm. But

every well disciplined sheep knows that if he is suffered to go *out* into the green pasture, he must go there through Jesus, as the door. What sheep or lamb has ever enjoyed this privilege only through Jesus?

But it is not for the good of the flock to remain at all times and seasons in the fields which spread along the banks of the river of still waters. Here is where he causeth his sheep to rest at noon. But the chilling night comes on, the howling tempest rends the skies, the rain, and hail, and snow comes down, and they now require shelter; but where can they find it but in the fold, where they must pass under the rod to attain it? Still they are as dependent on Christ, as the door, for ingress, as they were for egress; as it is only through him they receive all their spiritual enjoyments, comforts and safety, both in the pasture and in the fold.

Brother Harris being a farmer, and in a sheep growing State, is doubtless familiar with the various figures used. A sheep-fold is a building used as a shelter and protection for sheep, but it is not to imprison them, only while their comfort and safety requires they shall be kept there, and when they go into it, it is not to make them sheep, but because they are sheep. And when they go out by the door, it is into the pasture which is provided for them. So the sheep of Jesus, who have entered by him, and all those other sheep which he has, which were not of the old Jewish fold, but which he has redeemed from the Gentiles; them also he must bring, and they shall hear his voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. And as the one flock of the good Shepherd, they shall by him go in and out, and find pasture.

This figure may also teach us that there are *set times* to favor Zion, when the saints are favored, through Christ, with peculiar enlargement of joy, peace and love, and when they can go forth and feed their kids, beside the fold, or

shepherd’s tents, and other times when their joys are restricted and they are directed to enter into the rock, or turn to their stronghold, until it shall be again announced to them, the winter is past, the rains are over and gone; the flowers appear in the earth, the time of the singing of birds has come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 393 - 398

JOHN X. 12, 13.

Dear Brother Beebe: I have concluded to ask a favor of you, which is this, your views on John x. 12, 13. As I wish for all Old School Baptists to agree when they walk together, I am sorry to hear some say they think the wolf there spoken of catcheth the sheep, while others think he catcheth the hireling. This passage may seem to you so plain that any one that can see at all could see through it, but my brother, if I have any light at all, I feel myself to be so far from the fountain of light that I have nothing but the flickerings or glimmerings, so that I cannot see to satisfy my desires. I have frequently been to hear the truth preached, and on account of the crowd have been situated so remote from the speaker that with all the attention I could pay there would be some of his words that I could not understand; I knew I heard him speak, but was not sure I understood what he said. Now, if I have any spiritual sight or hearing, I know that I have fallen so far from God my Savior that if he by his Spirit ever speaks to me, I am so far off that I have doubts whether it is really him who speaks or not. If he speaks a promise to my poor soul, which for an instant almost makes me mount up with wings as eagles, and soar away from this world, the next instant I find myself just where I started from, and doubting whether that promise was mine; I cannot depend upon my hearing at such a distance from the speaker. Then I try the little glimmering light that seems to be flickering about me, with which I try to examine my landmarks, to see whether I am in the way or not, but the light is so dim, or my eyes so blind, that I cannot satisfy my mind, and I am often so benighted that I am almost afraid to call an Old Baptist brother, and if it were not that my name is in the list, and our rules require it, I believe I should not often apply the endearing term. I have no doubt of the Old School Baptiste being the children of the living God, and the

only people on earth that have the right to call the Savior of sinners their Elder Brother, for it is right for God's children to call each other brother and sister, but my fears are that I am not of that family. I have been for the last forty-five years trying to draw up close to that Great Preacher, our Elder Brother, that with my dull ears I might hear every articulation and understand every syllable, and read by his great light, so that I might, with my weak eyes, read every word, and distinctly see every letter in the promises; but alas! those forty. five years travel have landed me where I first found myself, away in our polluted world, where I could, by nature, neither see nor hear him whom I trust my soul loveth. Now, notwithstanding I have been striving so long to get up close to the Savior, I do not suppose that my nearest neighbors ever thought I was doing any good works. But I know more about that one thing than they do, for I know to a certainty that in all that time I never did, of myself, do one good thing, and I know I never can, for by sore and sad experience I know that in my flesh there is no good thing. What then can I work with? There being no good principle, what can I work from?

But please pardon me for troubling you to read so much, for I merely intended to send you the remittance, and ask your views on the above Scripture. I have my views, such as they are; if I am wrong, I wish to be right. If my views are right, others are wrong, and as we believe you are blessed with more than ordinary light on the Scriptures, your views are anxiously requested.

My brother, I try to pray God that his Spirit may shine in your heart, and open up the Scriptures plain to your view, so that you can expound it to his dear children, wherever they may be.

Yours, if not a brother, at least a friend,
J. P. TRUEAX.
Santa Fe, KY., July 26, 1860.

Reply: If not mistaken, we have already given our views on this text, but as our brother, and possibly some others, seem unsettled in regard to its true import, we will cheerfully give such views as we have. The principal difficulty seems to be to understand who it is that the wolf catches, the sheep, or the hireling shepherds. The text reads thus, "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

This illustration is designed to show the difference between the good Shepherd and an hireling. In the preceding verse Christ saith, "I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." To show his claim to this character which he assumes in the context, he contrasts the characteristics of a good shepherd and an hireling. The good Shepherd has an interest in the welfare of the sheep, and holds them dearer to him than his own life, so that he will throw himself between them and danger, and if necessity requires he will die for them rather than they should be destroyed by their enemies. This he has done: he has died to save his people, or sheep. Because he is thus related to them, he is their Shepherd, they are *his own* sheep, he had a right of property in them which he valued more than life. And as he has redeemed them from death with his blood, he is now pledged that they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of his hand.

All this goes to prove that he is truly the good Shepherd, whose own the sheep are. But the characteristics of an

hireling are the very reverse of this; he performs his task or labor only from selfish, mercenary considerations, he careth not what becomes of the sheep, if he can only secure his wages; when he sees danger approaching his first and only object is to take care of himself. The wolf may scatter or even catch and destroy the sheep for aught he cares, for he careth not for the flock, if they are destroyed the loss does not fall on him, but on the owner of the flock. These are some of the differences between the good Shepherd, who gave his life for his sheep, and a mere hireling, who would not expose himself to danger to save the flock from the devouring jaws of the enemy. The reasons assigned by our God why the hireling will desert the flock in the hour of danger are:

First, because he is an hireling.
Second, because he has no interest or right of property in *them - Whose own the sheep are not,* and finally, because he careth not for the sheep.

Hence, we may infer, if we as the sheep of Christ were dependent on a hired shepherd, one who only saves conditionally, or who only works for pay, we should certainly be destroyed by the wolf, but we have reason to bless God that such is not our case; we have a good Shepherd, who owns the flock, and is able and willing and determined to save them with an everlasting salvation. He is no hireling, and we may implicitly rely on his protection. “The Lord is my [our] Shepherd, we shall not want.”

Should we so interpret the text as to represent the wolf as catching the hireling instead of the sheep, we would destroy the whole figurative design of the comparison. Beside it would violate the plain rules of our language. The *noun* sheep is plural, and agrees with the pronoun *them,* which is also plural. But in the text, the hireling or *an hireling,* is in the

singular number, and cannot grammatically be the antecedent of the pronoun them.

This figure is not used to express the idea that the sheep of Christ are left in the fruitless and unreliable charge of the hireling, or that any of them can ever be destroyed by the wolf, for Christ declares that he himself is the Shepherd of his own sheep, and therefore they shall never perish, as they most undoubtedly would if their Shepherd were an hireling who did not own nor care for the sheep.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 399 - 402

JOHN 13:14,15

Dear Brother Beebe: - I have received a great deal of comfort and satisfaction in reading your editorials in the *Signs of the Times,* on different portions of the scriptures, and if it is not asking too much, I would like to have you give your views in full on John 13:14,15, and its connection. By doing so you will greatly oblige a well wisher to the truth, though an unworthy sister, if a sister at all.

M.C. Townsend.

REPLY: The text on which this sister desires our views reads thus: "If I then, your lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

We have on former occasions given our views on this subject, but we have given them only as *our views,* desiring our readers to compare them carefully and prayerfully with the scriptures as the infallible standard of truth. Fallible and imperfect as our views are, either in our own estimation, or as they may be regarded by others, we do not feel at liberty to withhold them when called for by our kindred in Christ, on any part of Divine revelation. All the gifts in the church are the common property of the church; for we are members one of another.

We have more delicacy in attempting to repeat our views on this than on other portions of the word, because we are conscious that some of our most highly esteemed brethren differ in their understanding of it; and until it shall please the Lord to give a clearer light on the subject, an agitation may produce discord and darken counsel by words without knowledge. Many of our churches, especially in the South and Southwestern parts of our country, understand and

practice the washing of each other's feet as a church ordinance, to be literally performed at some of their social meetings. While other churches understand the subject as having a figurative or emblematical signification to be observed in a metaphorical sense. But by a mutual understanding those churches agree to bear with each other, and do not make this difference of their understanding of this subject a bar of fellowship or communion. Still the advocates of both views appear to be somewhat sensitive on the subject, and so much so that an argument on the one side seldom fails to elicit a reply from the other. We have thought that under existing circumstances it were better for us either to let the matter rest until the Lord shall give us clearer light on the subject, or if impressed to discuss the subject, let the discussion be so conducted as to avoid saying or writing anything that can be construed to the disparagement of each other's sincerity or laudable motives.

The argument of brethren who practice washing each other's feet literally is that the words of our Lord to his disciples in our text and its connection seem clear, pointed, and emphatic. "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." This seems at least to them to be a sufficient authority to practice literally according to the example; and they cannot see how their brethren whom they love and fellowship can view it in any other light.

On the other hand, it is argued that the performance had a mystical or figurative significance which Jesus himself told the apostles that they did not at that time understand, which should afterwards be made known unto them. The apostles most certainly knew what he had done literally, for the custom of washing feet as an act of hospitality, kindness, and humility had prevailed for ages, both among Jews and Gentiles. What was it then that they did not at that time

comprehend or know in this example and precept which he had so positively enjoined on the apostles: for they were all apostles whose feet Jesus had washed? Can any of the brethren discover anything in the literal observance of washing feet which the apostles at that time could not understand? Why could they not understand the literal performance as well, if not better, than we can? But we must not dispute that there was something in and about this example and precept which even the apostles did not then understand, for to doubt this would be to doubt the plain words of Christ. What they did know was what was literally performed, that they were accustomed to, as a common practice already existing among them; but what they did not know was the figurative or spiritual application of the subject. This they should afterward know, for it was of the most vital importance to them and to the church of God that they should know, and fully comprehend, because they were very soon to receive from him the commission to "Go teach all nations, baptizing them," etc. 'Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19,20) The instructions given in our text were certainly among the things which the apostles were commissioned to teach the baptized believers to observe. And to teach them to observe them was not merely to teach them that they were required, but how, or in what way they were to be observed or obeyed. Therefore, although they did not at that time understand them, when they should be endowed with power from on high, when baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, when they should sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, then the Holy Comforter, even the Spirit of truth, would bring all these things whatsoever Christ had commanded them to their remembrance, and qualify them to teach all the spiritual tribes how to observe them. So it was certain they should know the true meaning of the example and precept in our text in good time to teach it to

the Gentile churches, and how to observe it. The importance of this lesson to the apostles, and through them to the churches, or baptized believers, may be inferred by Christ's words to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me." Can it be possible that the literal washing of Peter's feet in water was what secured to him an interest in Jesus? Or, does not this expression clearly imply a washing of which this literal washing was but a figure? All who have a part with Jesus are said to be washed by him in his own blood, from all iniquity; that he hath washed and cleansed them to himself as a peculiar people; that he hath saved them by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. In this cleansing all who are washed by him are cleansed every whit. If this is fairly implied, then that which the apostles were afterwards to know and teach had a deeper and more important signification than the mere washing of each other's feet literally in water.

Aside, however, from all speculation or conjecture as to what was designed to be signified by the washing of the apostles' feet, it must be conceded that the true import was finally perfectly understood by the apostles, and as they were expressly commanded to teach the baptized nations to observe *all things whatsoever* Christ had commanded them, we must either conclude that they have taught the true and proper import of washing feet, or that they have proved disobedient to their high vocation. To admit that they have withheld any instruction which they were commissioned to give would be to question their infallibility as inspired apostles, and, therefore, shake our confidence in them in the instructions which they have given. Though as men they were but men, and compassed about with all the infirmities common to the saints; yet, as apostles they were inspired by the Holy Ghost, so that what they bound on earth is bound in heaven, and what they loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. As princes they rule in judgment, and their decisions on all

subjects are final and conclusive, binding on all saints on earth what God has ratified in heaven, and loosing the saints from all obligations, religiously, that are not embraced in their instructions to the churches of the saints. If this conclusion be incorrect, what safety is there in relying on their decisions and instructions, as to the ordinances and order of the church of God? And if we regard the inspired apostles as the infallible exponents of all the laws and institutions of Christ which are binding on the saints; then we enquire how have they enjoined on us the obligation to wash one another's feet? Have they anywhere in the "Acts of the Apostles" or in their Epistles to the churches, by precept or by example, enjoined the literal washing of each other's feet? No instance of the kind is found in their practice among themselves, nor in the instructions to the saints. Shall we then conclude that they have disobeyed their commission? - that there is anything which Christ commanded them which they have failed to teach us to observe? None, we trust, will take that position. Better then for us to conclude that they have taught us to observe this instruction of our Lord as they understood it when its true import was made plain to them. We have seen that Christ in washing his disciples has made them clean every whit. Is there any sense in which the apostles have taught the saints to imitate the work of the Redeemer in what he has done to cleanse and purify them? We certainly are not taught that we can expiate sin, or that, our works, or even our blood, could purge the conscience of men from dead works to serve the living God; but we are frequently admonished to imitate the example of our Lord in watching over each other - in exhorting - admonishing, and praying for one another - not to suffer the defilement of disorder, or disobedience, or transgression of any of the laws of Christ as interpreted and expounded by his apostles to rest upon one another. The unparalleled love which Christ has manifested for his people in putting away their sins by the sacrifice of himself has been clearly pointed out as an

example to be copied by all the saints. We were told to love one another even as Christ has loved us and given himself for us; to forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. Husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it *with the washing of water, by the word.* that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

This washing of water, by the word, is not water literally, but by the word. A close and circumspect adherence to the word, both in regard to each of us individually, and to our brethren relatively, is cleansing in its nature, as water literally is cleansing as an element to natural things. Peter says, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." The word of truth, and obedience to the truth purifies the souls from error as water cleanseth things which are washed in it. Hence it is called the washing of water by the word. The feet are those members of the body by which we walk, and which in walking come continually in contact with the earth, and are therefore most exposed to defilement. So in our spiritual travel the saints are in conflict with the defilement of the earth, the world, etc.; and the care which Christ did so fully manifest for the purity of his disciples should be imitated by all his children, one to another. Now if the apostles were made to understand the lesson in our text to signify that the saints were to watch over one another in love, to bear each other's burdens, to exhort and admonish each other in love, to endeavor to reclaim an erring brother or sister in the spirit of meekness and humility, each considering himself, that he is also liable to become defiled, by instructing one another, teaching each other the way of the Lord more perfectly, each esteeming others better than himself, in sacrificing our own

personal comfort or accommodation for the benefit of the saints, with a readiness to lay down even our lives, if need be, for the promotion of the purity and comfort of the saints, then they have not failed to teach us by their examples, (for we have them for examples) and by their doctrine, to wash one another's feet in a spiritual sense. This course is washing, as it cleanseth from defilement, and as the washing of the weary wayworn traveler's feet in water is refreshing and healthy, so these services duly rendered, in the spirit of christian humility, are truly refreshing and comforting to those whose feet shall stand on Zion's hill. Beholding them, we may exclaim, "How beautiful are the feet of them who publish peace," etc.

"As through this wilderness we roam
And onward march toward heaven our home,
No not the filth of sin or earth
Defile our feet, or shame our birth.

Our feet with gospel grace well shod,
Dress'd in the armor of our God,
In all our walks let us be seen,
With hearts, and hands, and feet all clean."

Middletown, N.Y.,
August 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 222 – 227

JOHN 14:1-3

“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

The last solemn Passover supper that was ever to be eaten by divine authority had just been celebrated by our Lord and his disciples; the last lingering moments of the legal dispensation were ebbing away; Judas had received the sop, and Satan had entered his heart and taken the helm of his covetous, traitorous, perfidious mind, and he was at this moment negotiating with the priests and rulers of the people to betray the Son of man. The hour had arrived beyond which divine justice could defer his claim for vengeance no longer. The lowering clouds had gathered thick and darkly around the dear Redeemer, his soul, oppressed with sorrow, was bowed within him as the sin-bearing sacrifice now about to be offered; yet painful as was the bitter anguish of his holy soul, his thoughts were turned to his disciples, and amidst his stifled groans for what was now crushing his own soul, he said to his disciples, “Little children, yet a little while I am with you.” And that little while the golden moments were closely occupied in fortifying their minds for the dreadful scene which they were about to witness. Every moment was fully occupied, from the eating the Passover and institution of the supper, to the time of his arrest, in instructions to the disciples, and in communion, prayer and intercession to the Father. The substance of all these instructions and prayers is recorded in the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth chapters. Let them be often read and solemnly considered by all who love the Lord and hope in

his salvation. On such an occasion how deeply interesting and vitally important are the words which we are about to consider. Never was there such an occasion before, never can there be again, to try the faith and confidence of the saints of God. How suitable and how consoling the words: “Let not your heart be troubled.” Although these words were addressed to the eleven, and through them to all the church of God, but one heart is recognized; he does not say hearts, but heart, for the primitive disciples were of one heart and one mind. “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Not the heart of stone on which the Sinai covenant with Moses and the whole commonwealth of Israel was written, which was the center of their national vitality, by which they were embodied in distinction from all other nations, but that heart of flesh which was given to the mystical body of Christ, for Christ in his church is the center of spiritual vitality, of love, of unity and identity. He is the life and immortality of the church, which is his body. This Spirit of Christ in the members of his church is but one spirit, or heart, sending its vitality to every member. This heart was to be assailed by a dreadful trial, which was now about to fall with such crushing weight upon them. But, as though at once to let them know that he was fully aware of the approaching trial, and to give them a comforting assurance that it should result in their good and his glory, the kind, sympathetic words of encouragement are graciously spoken, Yield not to despair; let not your heart be troubled. “Ye believe in God, believe also in me.’~ The trial now approaching was peculiarly calculated to test their faith in him as the true Messiah that was to come. Although it might not shake their confidence in God, or lead them to fear that there is no God, was it not calculated to make them fear that Jesus was not the Son of God and Savior of his people, as they had understood him to be? It certainly did have that effect. They

said despairingly, We verily thought it was he that should redeem Israel. But alas, that confidence was shaken when they saw him crucified and his lifeless body laid in the grave. Still, though fearing that they had been mistaken in regarding him as the Son of God, they betrayed no lack of faith in God. Now these words of assurance seem to imply that there was in all they should witness, if properly understood, nothing that ought any sooner to be allowed to shake their confidence in him as the mediatorial Head of the church than to shake their faith in the eternal Father. Again, the same faith which recognized the Father, also must necessarily recognize the Son of God as one with the Father, for none can know the Father but by revelation of Christ, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Our faith cannot be so divided as to believe in God and disbelieve in Christ, for there is but one faith, as we have proven, and he that has by that one faith seen the Son, hath seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father; he and the Father are one.

"In my Father's house are many mansions." This is the affirmation of an existing truth, and a most glorious truth, and his ability to describe his Father's house was an evidence that he was the Son of God. A stranger could not describe that house which is made without hands, and which is eternal in the heavens, but Jesus is the faithful and true witness. No man hath ascended up into heaven, but the Son of God has come down from heaven, and reveals all that is necessary for us to know of the house of God, and if there were anything more concerning his Father's house which his children ought to know, he would have told them. The house of God is his dwelling-place, his place of permanent abode, where he makes his home. His house is figuratively set forth in types and shadows of the Old Testament as the tabernacle in the wilderness, as the temples in Jerusalem, and in a more spiritual manifestation made to the patriarch Jacob, where in

rapture he exclaimed, Verily, God was in this place, and I knew it not; this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. The gospel church and kingdom of Christ is called the house of God. Ye are God's building (I Corinthians 3:9). "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:5)." The house of God is frequentlymentioned in the Old Testament Scriptures, as Genesis 28:17; Joshua9:23; Judges 18:31; 20:18; Psalm42:4; 45:14; 42:8; 84:10; Isaiah 2:3; Micah 4:2, and in very many other passages, and yet we are informed that the Lord dwelleth not in houses made with hands. Figuratively he was said to dwell in the tabernacle in the wilderness, in the temples at Jerusalem, but all these were types, pointing to Christ and his church, or body, as the true spiritual dwelling-place of our God. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell; for I have desired it. I will abundantly bless her provision: I will satisfy her poor with bread (Psalm 132:13-15)." "His foundation is in the holy mountains. The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God (Psalm 87:1-3)." Therefore the holy psalmist could say, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord (Psalm 122:1)" "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee (Psalm 84:1,4)." The psalmist exulted in the certainty of dwelling in the house of the Lord forever, because the Lord was his Shepherd. (Psalm 23:6) This was the fullness of his aspiration. "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple (Psalm 27:4)." This is the house which our Redeemer calls "My Father's house," in which he says "are many mansions." Many opinions have been expressed in regard to the

figurative import of the many mansions here spoken of, and to our mind the precise meaning is not as clear as we could desire. The true meaning, whatever it be, must be important, as we infer from the words of our Lord: “If it were not so, I would have told you.” A mansion, in the modem application of the word, is a dwelling-place, sometimes applied to a house, and sometimes to apartments or rooms of a house. In our text a distinction is implied between the house and the mansions. “In my Father’s house are many mansions.” The mansions are many, but the house of God is but one. So when other figures are used to express the same idea, one body and many members, or one city and many inhabitants, “There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High (Psalm 46:4).” In the text last named, the city of God, which is but one, contains many tabernacles of the Most High. The same idea is expressed in I Corinthians 12:12-14: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.” “But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where was the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body (I Corinthians 12:18-20).” In changing the figures which represent the same kingdom, or church, from a house to a city, what in the former would be appropriately called mansions, in the latter would be more clearly expressed as houses, or tabernacles, and when a body is the figure, members of that body convey the same meaning. This to every citizen of the city of God is an appropriate dwelling, for “Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the

Lord. For there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David (Psalm 122:3-5).” There is in the house of God a place or mansion for every member of the household of God; thrones of judgment to be occupied by the apostles to sit upon, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. The sons of Zebedee could not change their allotted mansions or positions so as to sit one on the right and the other on the left hand of the King, when he should come into his kingdom, and as members of Christ, God has set each one in its appropriate place in the body of Christ as it hath pleased him. In the types of the ceremonial law the inheritance of each tribe was distinctly marked out and secured to each by an inalienable title, and so also in the positions assigned officially to patriarchs, prophets, priests, Levities, captains, kings and subjects. These types all pointed to the order of the house of God under the gospel dispensation, for in them were exhibited the patterns of the things of the heavenly kingdom, and although they were all confined to the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances of a fleshly, carnal Israel under the law, no doubt prefigured the heavenly places in Christ Jesus under the gospel dispensation in the true tabernacle which God has pitched, and not man.

The question may very naturally arise, If this be the sense in which our Lord spake of the many mansions of his Father’s house, why this special mention should be made of them on this most solemn occasion? All the words of our divine Lord were fitly spoken, well timed and full of vital interest to the saints. The organization of the gospel kingdom was now very soon to be manifested. The law and the prophets were until John; from the coming of John the kingdom of Christ was preached, that it was at hand, but the places in the gospel kingdom could not be attained until the last jot and tittle of the law should be fulfilled, until Christ should do and suffer all that was written of him in the law and in the prophets and in the Psalms, for he must suffer and then enter into his

glory, in coming into which he would ascend his mediatorial throne, and when the Son of man should sit on the throne of his glory, the apostles who had followed him in the regeneration should also sit upon their twelve thrones. The deliverance of all his people should then be effected, and each should receive the mansion which was prepared for in him the house of God. Fully with Christ in his death all his members were quickened together with him, and they were raised up together and made to sit together in Christ Jesus. But in all this, as in all things, Christ must have the preeminence; he must go before them in sufferings and death, must be the first-fruits of them that slept in his resurrection, yet by vital union and identity of spirit bearing his sheaves with him. Hence the suitableness of his solemn occasion to speak to them of the mansions, or heavenly places so soon to be occupied by them, when he should remove the bars of death, by abolishing death, and bring immortality to light in his resurrection, when at his command the everlasting doors should be opened, and the everlasting gates should lift up their heads, and the King of glory should come in with all the trophies of his deathless victory, and by his triumph prove that to believe in God is to believe also in him, and that the throne of his kingdom should be as firmly established and forever continue as unshaken as the throne of his eternal Father.

"If it were not so, I would have told you." They had been led to expect this and he would certainly have undeceived them if it were not so. Notwithstanding the terrible scenes immediately before them, which should so much try their confidence in him, the gloomy night of trial would soon be terminated, and the sable shades of darkness should be driven from their skies by the bursting light of his resurrection and the establishment of his kingdom and government as the Prince of Peace.

"I go to prepare a place for you." From the explanation which he gave the disciples in this connection we learn that he was going to his Father, for he said to them, "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." And in reply to the inquiry of Thomas he said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." This agrees with what he said unto Mary after his resurrection, and commanded her to tell the same to his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20:17)." He had also informed them that he was going to receive a kingdom, and to return again unto them. "And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Luke 22:29,30)." This kingdom, which was appointed unto him of his Father, is the place which, according to our understanding, he was going to prepare for his disciples. Although as an inheritance of the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world, according to Matthew 25:34, yet its manifest redemption and gospel organization awaited the resurrection and ascension of Christ. The God of heaven was to set it up in the days of those kings of whom Daniel had prophesied. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession (Psalm 2:8)." "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows (Hebrews 1:5,8,9)." Thus it was written, and thus it behooved him to suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and then to enter into his mediatorial glory as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, the only wise God our Savior.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." The *"if"* in this case is not to express doubt or uncertainty, for he had told the disciples that it was expedient for them, and that he would soon go away, and that his object in going away was to prepare a place for them where he would dwell with them uninterruptedly forever. Yet a little while and ye shall see me no more, and again a little while and ye shall see me. Whither I go thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow me hereafter. It was necessary that he should first suffer, and be the first to rise from the dead, but he assures them that he will come again and receive them unto himself, that where he is, there should they also be. True and faithful to his words of promise, he came again unto them after his resurrection, and abode with them a sufficient length of time to demonstrate his resurrection, and after his ascension he came unto them by his Spirit on the day of Pentecost, organized his kingdom in its gospel order, and into it received his disciples to go no more out forever. And again will he come to them in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory, and in their final resurrection in his image will he receive them to himself, that where he is, there they may be also. It is the will of the Father that of all he has given to Christ he should lose nothing, but that he should raise it up again at the last day. And this is also the will of the Son, who in his intercession has said, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory (John 17:24)."

Middletown, N.Y.
May 1, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 184 - 190

JOHN XIV. 2, 3.

"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

We submit to the consideration of our brethren generally, such views as we have upon the passage proposed. To our mind it appears to present one of the most interesting, instructing and joy-inspiring passages contained in the New Testament. The subject embraced in the figure, and so beautifully illustrated, is one of the most vital interest to all the saints while in the house of their pilgrimage. The shattered tenements of mortality in which we now dwell, are polluted with sin, large spots of leprosy are seen and felt upon the walls. Infirmity and mortality are wasting it away, and soon it must be dissolved and fall. How cheering then to know that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, and to be informed on such authority, having the assurance from the lips of Jesus himself, that mansions are provided for the final and everlasting habitation of all the heirs of God!

The occasion on which these words were spoken, give them additional interest. Jesus was about to die and suffer on the cross of Calvary. The Shepherd of Israel was about to be smitten with the sword, and the sheep to be scattered. The hour of his enemies, and the powers of darkness, was at hand, and their faith in him as the true Messiah, the Son of God, and Mediator between God and his people, was about to be put to a most frying test; but he says to them, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me." Though they should witness his sufferings, his agony and his blood, though they should see

him suffer, in the flesh, in the likeness of sinful man, let this not impair their confidence in him as the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. They were still to believe on him as they believed on the Father, that he and his Father are one; that he is in the Father, and the Father is in him. He then adds, “In my Father’s house are many mansions,” &c. Without stopping now to define the relationship of Father and Son, as involving the Mediatorial Headship, and life of the church, we pass to the consideration of his Father’s house, its mansions, its locality, its preparation, and its inhabitants.

When the patriarch Jacob in vision saw the mediatorial inter-communication between heaven and earth, and the angels ascending and descending upon the ladder which he saw, he said prophetically, Truly the Lord was in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven. The figurative design of the Ladder is settled by our Savior’s words, “Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” He who is the Son of man, is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and no man cometh unto the Father, but by him, nor can any blessings flow down from the Father to the saints through any other medium or channel, for God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.) He is therefore the antitype of that ladder, of which Jacob by the Spirit said, “None other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.” That Christ is the house of God, and the gate of heaven, is manifested from the assurance that the Father is in him, and in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And not only that God the Father dwells in him, “And ye are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power. - Col. ii. 9, 10.

By the many mansions in this house, we understand the places in the spiritual building for every child of God, or member of the family of God. Not that they are divided by partitions from each other, but rather that they are all members in particular of his body, or to keep in view the figure of a house, they are built up in him, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit; a building of sufficient capacity to shelter, secure and contain the whole family of God. The terms in our text, "mansions," and "a place for you," appear to be interchangeably used by our Lord, and to our mind signify the ample provision for the eternal abode of all the people of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

A brother desires us to say, where and what place Jesus said he was going to prepare. We can attach no other locality to this house, or place, than was expressed by the inspired apostles: it is eternal in the heavens, and this is locality enough for us. But let us observe the plural form of the word heavens. Three, or a third heaven, is spoken of by the apostle Paul, and from the account he gave of his being caught up into the third, and of the unutterable glory which he saw, we understand it to be that heaven from which Christ said he came down, when he made his advent to this world, and where he had existed in his Mediatorial relation to the church from everlasting, in view of which the enraptured psalmist exclaimed, "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." - Psalm xc. 1, 2. The first and second heavens, we understand refer to the two distinct dispensations. Under the old, it is said of Christ, "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." - Isa. lxiii. 9. Of Christ as the dwelling-place of his people, Moses said, "The eternal God is their Refuge." - Deut.

xxxiii. 27. And concerning the gospel dispensation it is written of Christ, “Behold, a King shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest: as rivers of water in a dry place, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” - Isaiah xxxii. 1, 2. That this house stands as the dwelling-place of his people, under the gospel dispensation, is settled beyond all controversy, by the testimony of John, Rev. xxi. 1-3, “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” These references are deemed sufficient to prove that this building of God is not only in heaven, but in the heavens.

These Scriptures do not, in our understanding of them, refer to his flesh, and blood, which he took on him, when he was made of a woman, for in that flesh and blood, he was not with his saints under the old, nor in flesh and blood is he now with them under the present dispensation. But the angel of his presence is with them, as their life, their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He is in them, and they are in him, and they abide in him as the branch abides in the vine, and from his fullness they derive all their vigor, health and comfort. Lastly we are to consider the import of his words, “I go to prepare a place for you,” &c. There is a sense in which the kingdom of glory was prepared as an inheritance for the saints, from the foundation of the world. But their human or Adamic bodies were created in Adam, and constitute now the earthly house which is soon to be dissolved and fall; from this house of their pilgrimage they

are to be removed to their house which is in heaven. In this, the earthly house, we groan, being borne down with infirmities, and we earnestly desire to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. “For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit,” &c. - 2 Cor. v. 1-5. The preparation of the place designated in our subject, appears to us to be for the bodies of his saints. Their spiritual life had already existed in that eternal building from everlasting, but our flesh and blood have not inherited the kingdom, neither can they, because corruption cannot inherit incorruption. But we are assured that the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. This resurrection has not yet taken place, neither is our mortality yet swallowed up of life, but God has wrought us for the selfsame thing, and he has given unto us, in confirmation of the blessed reality, the earnest of the Spirit. This spiritual earnest, is the evidence of something still in prospect. For after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. (Eph. i. 13, 14; see also chapter iv. 20.) Paul says, “We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” - Romans viii. 22, 23. That new life within the saints is not groaning and waiting to be adopted, for it is already in Christ, and never was out of him. He that hath the Son, hath the life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life, for this is the record that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Adoption can add nothing to the interest of a home

born child; the work of adoption is to bring in the purchased possession the field wherein the priceless treasures of his members were hidden. This is the purchased possession, and they are to be quickened with resurrection life; their mortality is to be swallowed up of life, and they are to be brought by adoption into that place which Jesus went to prepare.

The question returns, What preparation was necessary for the reception of this purchased possession? We conceive, the first to rise from the dead; that the body in which he suffered and died, being the first begotten from the dead, should be the first to arise from the dead, as the first fruits of them that slept. For in all things he must have the pre-eminence. That body which was born of the virgin, though holy and immaculate, was a mortal body, or it could not have died, but it has now passed the portals of immortality, and in it holds the keys of hell and death. Now the way is open into the holy place, and by the personal presence of the Lamb that standeth upon Mt. Zion, who says, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." The place is ready. The heavens have received them, that where he is, there they may also be.

"And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself." Blessed promise; in like manner as the disciples saw him ascend, shall we also see him descend again, upon the cloud of heaven, with power and great glory, in that crucified, but risen and glorified body in which the heavens received him. He shall come to raise the dead, and judge the world at the last day. He will raise them up in the likeness of his glorious body, and abide in the house which is eternal in the heavens.

Such, brethren, are our views of the passage. Try them by the word of truth, and if they accord not therewith, reject them; but if any of you should dissent from them, do it in a spirit of kindness.

Middletown, N. Y.
September 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 242 - 247

JOHN XIV. 12.

ELDER GILBERT BEEBE – DEAR BROTHER: – Having been a reader of the SIGNS forty-six years, and never having troubled you, I now request you to give your views on John xiv. 12, especially the last clause. I remain your brother in hope of eternal life.

RICHARD WOMMACK.
Old Alexandria, Mo., Jan. 21, 1880

"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

REPLY: – These gracious words of our Lord were addressed to the eleven apostles, after Satan had entered into Judas, and he had left them and gone out to betray him. The trying time, and all the surroundings of the occasion on which these words were spoken, give additional solemnity and significance to them. Though troubled and amazed himself, because the dreadful hour for which he had come into the world had arrived, and his own soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, yet he was not unmindful of the strong support and comfort they would require to bear them up in the terrible hour when their faith in him as the true Messiah, and his ability to accomplish the great work of salvation, should be put to the severest test; when they should see him arrested, tried, condemned, mocked, scourged, crowned with piercing thorns, nailed to the cross, crucified, and put to death in the most cruel manner that men or devils could invent. By his foreknowledge he could anticipate their sinking spirits, their waning confidence, their trembling faith, their growing fears, when they should see him, on whom all their hope for life and immortality depended, condemned to suffer an ignominious death and be

laid in the grave. They did not, could not know or realize as yet the dreadful reality of what they were so soon to realize. But even now, instead of asking sympathy or aid from them, he gently reproved the impulsive proposition of Peter to shield him from impending violence. Peter's sword could not avert, nor his burning zeal and courage roll back, the flood of suffering which must now submerge the soul of the holy, harmless Lamb of God. In the course of the terrible tragedy Peter was to be sifted as wheat, and to act a very different part from that of protecting his Lord and Master.

But Jesus, knowing the weakness of their flesh and willingness of their spirit, said unto them, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." How often have we thought, that if from his blessed lips we could have the same assurance that we truly believe in God, and that *our* faith in God is genuine, we could endure all things for his sake, and like Peter say, "I will lay down my life for thy sake;" but before the scene of trial is over, like him, have we denied him in shameful way or form, for which after he has again looked upon us, we have wept bitter tears of shame and anguish. The trying ordeal through which they were about to pass might not drive them to atheism, but it would challenge their faith in him as the Son of God and Savior of his people. It was calculated to make them doubt that he was the embodiment of the supreme Deity, that the Father was in him, and he was in the Father, and that the work which he performed and the word which he spake were performed and spoken by the Father which dwelt in him. It was not by any power of the fleshly nature in which his eternal Godhead was mantled that his mighty works were wrought, for his has said, "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." – John vi. 62, 63. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of

myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very work's sake." The works which the Father wrought by him fully justified and demonstrated the truth which he had told them, that he was in the Father, and the Father was in him, and that he and the Father are one. In this connection he adds the words of the text on which our friend desires our views: "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." He that believeth on Jesus, as we are assured, hath everlasting life. – John vi. 47. And as this everlasting life is in Christ, and with him hid in God, "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son." – 2 John 9. As the Father and the Son are one, no man can have the Father and not the Son, neither can any have the Son and not the Father and the Holy Ghost, for these three are one. – John v. 7.

Now therefore, as all the fullness of the Godhead dwells bodily in Christ, and was manifest in his flesh in the days of his incarnation, and wrought all the works which he performed, so the Father and the Son dwells by his spirit in all who believe on Christ, and performs all the works of righteousness in and by them which God approves, and which give evidence that they are one with Christ, even as he is one with the Father.

As the works which the Father wrought by the Son when he was here in the flesh testified of him that he was the Son of God and one with the eternal Father, so all our works, which God hath wrought in us as his sons and heirs in Christ, are a conclusive evidence that "God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure." – Isa. xxvi. 12; Phil. ii. 13. With him working in us, we can do all things; but without him we can do nothing. Even as Jesus said, "of himself," or

independently of his indwelling Godhead, he could do nothing, for it was the Father which dwelt in him that doeth the works which testified of him that he is the Son of God, who came in the flesh to do not his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work; so also the children of God, identified with him in his Sonship, begotten of the Father, are made partakers of flesh and blood in like manner as he was, and as that eternal life which was in the Son eternally with the Father, was given to us in the Sonship of Christ, as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, is in his Son, and as both the Father and the Son dwell in every member of Christ who believes on him, "Jesus answered and said unto him [Judas], If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and WE will come unto him, and make our abode with him." – John xiv. 23. Jesus was now about to leave the disciples, and to ascend up where he was before he came in the flesh, and in his flesh they should know him no more forever, for he was to be glorified with his Father's own self, the glory which he had with the Father before the world began; but he would not leave them comfortless, for he would send them another Comforter, even the Holy Ghost, who should abide with them forever. "These things [said he] have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father shall send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." – John xiv. 25, 26. This is undoubtedly the spirit of the Lord God which was upon him, (Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18,) which was given him as our Mediatorial Head without measure, (John iii. 34,) and which is given to all the members of his mystical body by measure." – Rom. xii. 3; 1 Cor. ii. 7. Thus we learn that the "three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost," dwell in Christ, and Christ dwells by his spirit in the church, which is his body, and in every member of his body; for "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he

is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." – Romans viii. 9, 10. The dwelling of Christ by his spirit in the hearts of all the vessels of his mercy, whom he has redeemed from the family of the first Adam, is the power by which they shall do the works which Christ doeth; for without him they can do nothing, and yet they can do all things through Christ who strengthens them. Thus all their works, by which they are made manifest as the sons of God, are wrought in God, who worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. This is the work of God (not of our flesh), that we should believe on him whom the Father hath sent. – John vi. 29.

The particular points on which we presume our brother and many others desire to be enlightened, are, how believers on Christ shall do the works which Jesus does, and what are the greater works *than these* which they shall do. The different degrees of greatness in the works of Jesus implied in this assurance, and what are the works of less magnitude, and what the greater, seem to involve a mystery, to our limited understanding, which can only be solved by that Holy Comforter who shall teach the disciples all things, and bring to their remembrance all things whatsoever Jesus had said unto them. There is such an infinity in all the works which Christ has performed as to overwhelm our little minds when we attempt to measure or compare them. As he said when he had washed the feet of his disciples, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." – John xiii. 7. The works which he in his supreme Godhead had performed, and his providential control and government of the universe, we do not understand to be the works of which he speaks in our text; but that he is here speaking of his Mediatorial works, in doing the will of the Father, and finishing the work which the Father gave him to do, as the Head of the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him

that filleth all in all. Now, as the Father, in all the fullness of his eternal Godhead, was manifest in the person of Christ, and all the works which he performed in the days of his flesh were by him attributed to the Father which dwelt in him, and in whose name they were all performed; so the Son, in all the power and glory of the Father, dwells in his body, the church, and without him his members can do nothing. As he says of himself, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." – John v. 19, 30. So he saith to his disciples, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the Vine, ye are the braches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." – John xv. 4, 5. This very illustrative figure seems to us to clearly teach that as the indwelling Godhead, the Father in him, and he in the Father, and oneness or identity of the Father and the Son, makes him the efficient Mediatorial Head and Savior of his body, the church, and all the efficiency of his Mediatorial work comes from the Father, as a vine proceeds from its root, so all spiritual blessings come to the church from God the Father through Jesus Christ, just as the vitality and fruitfulness of the vine proceeds from its root. The vital principle that causes the vine to shoot out its branches, and the branches to bear fruit, must have been hidden in the root, just as the life of the church is hid with Christ in God. All proceed from God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son, else we might as well look for grapes from thorns, as from the true vine. Jesus says in this connection, "Here in is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." The root would not be glorified if it did not fructify the branches. It is well known that if a branch is severed from the vine, or the vine from its root, neither the vine could bear branches, nor the branches bear fruit. So if it were possible to separate us from Christ, or Christ from his eternal Godhead, no fruit

could be borne either by the Vine or any of its branches. “As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; EVEN as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.” Thus, as the works which Christ has done in his Father’s name are the works of God, (John xiv. 10,) so also all the works which he hath wrought in us as his members are wrought in him, and the works which he has wrought in us our works, the same as the fruits of the root are the fruits of the vine and of the branches of the vine.

The works which Jesus did while here in the flesh in obedience to the will of the Father, will include, if we understand, the miracles which he wrought in healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, casting out devils, and in raising the dead. All these were in demonstration of his identity with the Father, and he repeatedly referred to them as witnessing his Messiahship; and we are informed in the faithful record that his disciples, especially his apostles, performed the same wonderful miracles in his name, in demonstration of their high and holy calling. After his resurrection from the dead, and before he ascended to the Father in a cloud, he gave commandment to the disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and said unto them, “And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” “And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” – Mark xvi. 17, 18, 20. “And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” – Luke xxiv. 29. After the apostles were endued with power from on high we find them performing those works of which Christ had spoken, and they performed

them by the name of Jesus. "And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness," &c. And, "If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." – Acts iii. 16; iv. 9, 10. "And now, Lord, behold their threatening: and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word, by stretching forth thine hand to heal: and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus." – Acts iv. 29, 30. Certainly the works they performed by the name of Christ verified the declaration, The works that I do shall he do also; but still the question remains in regard to the words, "*and greater works than these* shall he do: because I go unto my Father." Surely the crowning work of our Redeemer was that of his going to his Father. Had he failed in this, the whole work assigned him in his Mediatorial relations must have utterly failed. Had the heavens refused to receive him, had not the everlasting gates been lifted up that the King of glory might enter in, the salvation of the church must have failed, and we today would be without an Intercessor in heaven, and all the works which he performed in his incarnation would have proved a failure. But,

"Behold, he mounts the throne of state,
He fills the Mediatorial seat,
And millions bowing at his feet
With long hosannas tell,
Though he endur'd exquisite pains,
He led the monster, death, in chains,
Ye seraphs, raise you loudest strains,

With music fill bright Eden's plains,
He's conquered death and hell."

The resurrected Savior said to Mary, at the vacated sepulcher in which he had reposed, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." – John xx. 17. Blessed message! cheering news! joyful tidings! The Lord has triumphed gloriously. The Lord is risen indeed, and become the first fruits of them that slept; and because he lives, they shall live also. He has entered into heaven, as the head and recognized representative of his body, the church, including all her members, are included with their victorious Head. They were all of them buried with him by baptism into his death when he died for them; then were they all dead. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ." Although the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth, it can pursue him no further. And being risen with Christ, his members are to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Having been crucified with Christ, we are also risen with him to newness of life and being presented to God in the perfect righteousness of our adorable head and representative, without spot or blemish, we are accepted in the Beloved. All this, or these works, which excel the miracles performed as signs which attested the Redeemer's identity with the Father, and our vital unity with Christ, Jesus says, "because I go unto my Father," these greater works shall be by them performed; that is, as we understand, his going to his Father, bearing all his sheaves or members with him, we also go unto our Father, and find access to him by and through his death and resurrection. This vital union of Christ and his people, as the head and body of the church of the living God, is expressed by Moses, "Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand." "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live forever." – Deut. xxxii. 40; xxxiii. 3.

We heartily accept the strong language of Mr. Kent on this subject, as expressed in hymn No. 206 of our Baptist Collection:

"Before the day-star know its place,
Or planets went their round,
The church in bonds of sov'reign grace
Were one with Jesus found.

In all that Jesus did on earth
His church an int'rest have;
Go, trace him, from his humble birth,
Down to the silent grave.

'Twas for his saints he tasted death;
All glory to his name;
Yet when he breath'd his dying breath,
With him his saints o'ercame.

With him his members, on the tree,
Fulfill'd the law's demands;
'Tis 'I in them, and they in me,'
For thus the union stands.

Since Jesus slept among the dead,
His saints have naught to fear;
For with their glorious suff'ring Head
His members sojourn'd there.

When from the tomb we see him rise
Triumphant o'er his foes,
He bore his members to the skies;
With Jesus they arose.

Ye saints, this union can't dissolve,
By which all things are yours;

Long as eternal years revolve,
Or Deity endures.”

We can hardly expect to escape the unkind criticisms of those who lie in wait to accuse us of heresy; but why should we shrink from reproach for his dear sake, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, who endured the cross and despised the shame? If he who is the brightness of his Father’s refulgent glory, and the express image of his person, was reproached and buffeted, why should a trembling mortal, just on the verge of his final and everlasting destiny, worn down with age and infirmity, just ready to step across the narrow line which divides the heavenly land from these earthly shores, ask or desire exemption from the reproaches of the enemies of the cross, and the censures of mistaken friends? We have been asked for our views, and feeble as they are, we dare not withhold them; we express them candidly, with such ability as we have, to be examined carefully by our readers, and with no desire on our part that they shall be accepted only so far as they are sustained by the unerring scriptures of truth. Wherein we are right, may God be praised; and in all wherein we err, may God forgive, and brethren forbear, and as light may be given, show us the better way.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 14
July 15, 1880.

JOHN 14:21

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”

On that solemn and eventful night in which our Lord was betrayed, and but a little while before he suffered on the cross, these words were spoken by him to his disciples. Although pressed in spirit, crushed beneath the ponderous weight of all the sins of his people which were laid on him, groaning in spirit with his soul exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and having a baptism to be baptized with, and pressed until it should be accomplished, with all the mighty anguish of his own soul wringing from him, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground, he did not for a single moment forget the dear objects of his love for whom he was about to pour out his soul. As with his omniscient glance he comprehended the mighty billows of overwhelming surprise and grief into which they were about to be immersed, when they should see the dearest object of their love rudely torn away from them by a murderous mob, and see him buffeted, insulted, spit upon, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, nailed to the torturing cross, and put to death by wicked hands, when his dying groans should seem to put out the sun, and veil the earth in darkness, rend the rocks, startle the slumbering dead, and convulse the universe. Knowing, as he did, the willingness of their spirit, but the weakness of their flesh, he gave them words of comfort against the trying hour. “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.” How seasonable was this admonition. Nothing could be more directly calculated to shake their confidence in him as the Messiah whom they had believed him to be, and make them fear that they had mistaken his true character, than what they were now about to witness.

They verily believed that it was he that should redeem Israel, that he possessed almighty power, but now to see the powers of earth and hell appear to prevail against him must certainly try their faith in him as the Mighty God and Everlasting Father. But though he bows his mighty head in death, his Father's throne in heaven is not more firmly established than his ultimate and complete triumph over sin, death and the grave; nor is he less reliable for their faith and confidence than his Eternal Father. As they therefore believe in God, they have his warrant to believe in him. This assurance of faith should shield their trembling heart from trouble. Had they understood and remembered what he had told them, that he should rise again on the third day, and that it was expedient for them that he should suffer, and rise again, they would have been less disconsolate. And it is even so now with the saints, when our faith and confidence is unwavering in Jesus, our heart is protected from trouble. It is only when the surging waves of temptations and trials assault our faith that cruel doubts and fears prevail against us now. Whenever we believe as firmly in Jesus as our Savior as we believe in the existence and perpetuity of the government of the Eternal Father, our joys are unspeakable and full of glory.

Truly he was going away, but it was for them, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Could we but know and understand that our trials are all designed to secure this result, that where Jesus is, there we may be also, how cheerfully could we submit to them all. What trouble would be too great for us to endure, if necessary to secure to us the abiding presence of our dear Redeemer?

We love to trace the whole connection of his words of instruction and consolation recorded in this most interesting chapter, but we designed to dwell at this time more

particularly on the text presented at the commencement of this article.

“He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” In the fifteenth verse he says, “If ye love me, keep my commandments,” and in this verse he tells us who they are that love him. It is sometimes a point we long to know, whether we love Jesus or not. Our love, if indeed we have any, seems to us so cold and languid that we can hardly satisfy ourselves that we are the people who are distinguished from all others by this peculiar mark. Let this question be settled, and all will be right with us. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, if we love the brethren,” and, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This very important question is settled by our Lord. “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me.” Observe:

First. The commandments of Christ spoken of in this text are not the precepts of Moses, which were given to the carnal seed of Israel, unto whom pertained the covenants, the giving of the law, etc. (See Romans 9:4.) The law of carnal or *fleshly* commandments was given to them, and they had Moses preaching to them every Sabbath day; but they were not thereby characterized as lovers of Christ, for the law made nothing perfect. Nor yet the law under which the human family was created in Adam, for all have fallen and come short of the glory of God; but the commandments of Christ are those which indicate his spiritual dominion as the King of saints. And these embrace all his laws and ordinances which he has enjoined upon his redeemed, called and quickened subjects, as members of his body, of his flesh, and

of his bones. A perfect record of his commandments are found in the New Testament, and a transcript, a perfect duplicate of them, is written in the hearts of his spiritual subjects, embracing all that he requires of them in faith or in practice. To neglect or disobey anything which he has commanded, or to do anything religiously that he has not commanded, is equally perverse and reprehensible.

Second. These commandments of Christ were never given to the world, but to the subjects of this spiritual kingdom which is not of this world, which is diverse from all the kingdoms of this world, and which he has redeemed from the world. "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples (Isaiah 8:16)." His commandments require spiritual action, and are totally inapplicable to all such as are not born of the Spirit. "The carnal mind is emnity against God; it is not subject to the law of God (to this law of the Spirit of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord), neither indeed can be." Repentance, faith, spiritual mindedness, baptism, communion, fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the church of God, are not given to the ungodly. They have never received, and therefore they who hate Christ have not his commandments. As the covenants of the law were placed carefully in the consecrated Ark of the testimony, so the laws of Christ are hidden in his church, and in the hearts of his people.

Third. The kingdom of Christ has its well-defined boundaries. "Judah was his sanctuary, and Israel his dominion (Psalm 114:2)." No one can so much as see this kingdom except he be born again; and except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The laws of no prince or potentate extend beyond the bounds of territory over which he presides. While Christ's providential government extends over all beings, all worlds, and all events, his Mediatorial government, as the Prince and Savior

of his people, is confined to his spiritual subjects, who are known in the scriptures as "A seed (that) shall serve him, and be counted to the Lord for a generation (Psalm 22:30)."

Fourth. In the preaching of Christ and his apostles, none of the commandments of Christ were ever addressed indiscriminately to saints and sinners. When the Good Shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and they follow him, and he leadeth them out. He knows his own sheep, and he is known of them. He calleth his own sheep by name, they hear and know his voice, and they follow him, and he giveth them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of his hands. (See John 10.)

When, in the beginning of the gospel, John came from God with a commission to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, some who were not prepared for the Lord came to him for baptism, and although he had commanded those to whom he was sent to "repent and be baptized," he demanded of the Pharisees and Sadducees who had warned *them* to flee from the wrath to come. They must first demonstrate to him that they were prepared for the Lord; that is, for the kingdom and spiritual government of Christ, by fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say that Abraham was their father. For Pharisees or Sadducees, willworshipers, or any who were not quickened, to be baptized would be to obey no command of Christ. He has never commanded any but believers who love him to be baptized. It would be sacrilegious for any but believers, whether infants or adults, to be baptized. Philip said to the eunuch, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." Let it be observed that the Holy Ghost sent Philip and inspired him to give this very answer to the direct question of the eunuch, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" That which should hinder the eunuch would hinder any one else: and that which qualified him is a sufficient

qualification for any one else. “If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest.” His profession of faith was plain and clear. “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” Enough; Philip is satisfied. The chariot stops, and the eunuch is baptized, and then goes on his way rejoicing; and the Spirit caught away Philip to labor elsewhere. Now the eunuch was not required to say, I feel worthy of the ordinance, I am satisfied I shall do honor to my profession, or I have Abraham to my father. He was a believer, which he could not have been if he were not born of God, and being a quickened believer, he had the commandment; he did love Jesus, and it was therefore his happy privilege. But to settle this matter effectually and forever, we have only to observe what Jesus says in verse fifteen, “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” The commandments of Christ are given only to them that love him; they only have his commandments who love him; and they love him because he has first loved them. The commandments of Jesus are not confined to baptism, but all is embraced that he has enjoined on them. But baptism is the first in the order of the commands which are given to believers who love him; and they cannot live one hour after he has revealed his love in their hearts in neglect of the holy ordinances, where a door is open for them, without involving disobedience. His commandments which they have require them to deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and to follow the Lamb, to walk in love and fellowship with those in his church who have obtained like precious faith, and given evidence thereof by obedience in like manner to Christ. He commands them to be separate from the world, to renounce its vanities, to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints: but he commands them to use such weapons as belong to the armor of God; not carnal weapons, for they are forbidden to render evil for evil to any man, but to love their enemies, pray for them who despitefully use and persecute them. The

whole code of Jesus' commandments are now upon them. They take his yoke in baptism, and before heaven and earth declare their allegiance to him as their supreme Potentate and King. His vows are upon them, and it becomes their privilege, as it is their duty, to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them, whatever amount of self-denial it may require, or whatever of persecution it may involve. But one preliminary question is allowed, "If ye love me?" This settled, and all his commands are imperatively binding on all such.

Thus we see that inasmuch as the commands of Christ are restricted to those exclusively who love him (for he will have no subjects in his kingdom but such as love him), therefore he that hath them, 'and keepeth, or obeyeth them, is really and manifestly him that loveth him, and to all such loving and obedient children the gracious assurance of our text belongs.

"And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father." This is an assurance and guarantee of the perpetuity of the love of God to all such as bear the description already given. Not by any means as a consequence of their love to Christ, nor to be regarded as a reward of merit, for:

1st. God's love is eternal, immutable, sovereign and self-moving, beyond the power of any influences that can possibly be brought to bear upon it. Had this not been the case, it could never have reached any of the degenerate and guilty sons of men. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (Ephesians 2:4-5)."

2nd. The love of God the Father was given to the saints, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who

hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love (Ephesians 1:3,4).” And in John 17:23,24, “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world.” The positive declaration that God’s love to his people was before the foundation of the world forbids the idea that it was ever induced by any influence brought to bear since the foundation of the world.

3rd. It is of too high and holy a character to be moved by influences necessarily of an inferior order. Besides, if it could have been induced by any agency whatever, it might by the same agency be repelled or wholly withdrawn.

One may then inquire, why is it thus said, “And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father.” We understand it to be given as a comforting assurance of the perpetuity of the love of the Father to those who are so clearly identified as the members of Christ. As the love of the Father to them is *even* with, or equal to, his love to Christ, although they may seem to themselves, and to the world, so unworthy of such manner of love as God has bestowed on them, that they should be called his sons, still the world shall know that God has loved them even as he has loved Christ. And furthermore, we understand the declaration to embrace the manifestations of his love to them. Many things occur to make us fear that God’s mercies are, so far as we are concerned, clean gone forever, and that he will love us and be gracious to us no more. So it appeared to the reasoning capacities of the Jews in regard to our suffering Redeemer on

the cross. “He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God.” His sufferings were regarded by carnal men as evidence that God did not love him, and so our own carnal reason insinuates to us that if God loved us, he would save us from such dreadful temptations as we sometimes endure; but to fortify the disciples for the dreadful trial, he assures them that his Father will love them. How inspiring the assurance! What could so well fortify us for sore afflictions, bitter persecutions, or strong temptations, as the assurance that God will manifest his love to us? If then we have the commandments of Jesus, and are enabled through abounding grace to obey them, such manifestations of the love of the Father are made to us as to revive our faith, confirm our hope, and banish our doubts and fears.

“And I will love him, and manifest myself to him.” Even when he rebukes and chastens his people for their disobedience, or for the trial of their faith, he loves them, and in love he scourges them for their good; but the tenderness of his love to them is not so manifest to their understanding as when they have his commandments, and walk in obedience to him. “The way of the transgressor is hard,” but the pathway of the righteous shines brighter and brighter. The experience of all the children of God agrees with this instruction. We cannot expect to enjoy the smiles of our Savior, and realize the glowing manifestations of his love flowing into our hearts when we forsake his law, and walk not in his judgments, when we break his statutes and keep not his commandments; for then he will, in covenant faithfulness, visit our transgressions with the rod, and our iniquity with stripes. He will not only give to his obedient children gracious and cheering manifestations of his love, but he will manifest himself to them. “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.” He comes by his Spirit, in his word, and manifests himself as their Prince and Savior, the Captain of their

salvation; as their Deliverer, their Protector, and their all. In all his relations to them, he manifests himself, and in all his offices he reveals himself to them for their comfort, safety and encouragement.

It is a blessed thing to have his commandments; to be a subject of his spiritual government; to feel his love shed abroad in our hearts, drawing us to his embrace, and inclining us to honor and obey him. Thrice blessed to abide in his love; for he says, “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:10).”

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 377 - 384

JOHN 15:6

“If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.”

To the appeal for our views on this text made by sister Force, in our last number, we promised to respond in the present issue. The instructions of our divine Lord and Master, his admonitions and words of encouragement to his disciples, are frequently expressed in figures and parables, selected and employed by his infinite wisdom and most graciously adapted to our finite minds and very limited capacities. Yet although the most familiar things in nature are used to illustrate spiritual things, unto none but the saints is it given to know the things of the kingdom of Christ, and to all others all the instructions of our Lord are but parables, or dark and mysterious sayings which they can by no means comprehend. Hence, will-worshipers and Arminians generally profess to find in the beautiful figure of the vine and its branches only an implied threat of damnation to the children of God to be used as a scourge to lash them to vigilance from fear of falling from grace and sinking down to the perdition of the ungodly. But the child of God, taught by the Spirit to understand the true design of this cluster of figures, is thoroughly convinced that so far from sustaining the doctrine of free-will, human power or creature merit, its application tears them all up, root and branch, and that the idol of human agency in procuring the salvation which is in Christ Jesus must fall before it as Dagon fell before the Ark of God. In the connection of our text, Jesus says, “I am the true vine; my Father is the husbandman,” etc. The eternal deity of Christ, his independent, self-existent Godhead, abstractly considered, is incomparable, “Unto what shall we liken him?” We are forbidden to make any image, picture or comparison;

but Christ in his Mediatorial glory is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person; and is therefore the image of the "Invisible God," or Godhead. God is therefore never visible to men in the flesh, only as he is revealed in the person of his Son. In the Son of God dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; or *embodied,* and in that embodiment he is revealed to the faith of God's children.

"God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our (the saint's) hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." They, therefore, and they alone who have seen the Son have seen the Father also; for he is in the Father and the Father is in him; he and his Father are one. So also as the one Mediator between God and man, is he One with his church, and every one that has seen his church, has seen Christ. For his church is one with him, even as he is one with the Father.

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." That kingdom which is invisible to all who are not born again is the body of Christ, and the fullness of Christ. And in his church dwells all the fullness of Christ bodily, or embodied, even as the fullness of the Godhead is embodied in him. Now the vine and branches are in our figure, Christ and his members, and his Father is the Husbandman, having the full charge, care and culture of it. And he says, "In that day sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day (Isaiah 27:2,3)." It is very evident then that the vine in our figure signifies Christ in his Mediatorial identity with his church. The same figure is applied by the Holy Ghost both to Christ and his church. David and Solomon, and Isaiah and others, speaking by the Holy Ghost, calls the church a vine, having tender grapes, etc. But the church cannot be found out of Christ; nor, we bless God, can Christ be found out of the church which is his body, the

fullness of him that filleth all in all. Then when Christ says I am the true vine, we understand that he is the true vine, including all his branches. The same is expressed in a figure of similar import, used by Paul: “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and these members, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” So also is the true vine. National Israel was the typical vine which God brought out of Egypt; but Christ is the true, anti-typical vine and his members are the branches of Christ, and are so identified as to bear his name.

Now, having thus far dwelt upon the figure of the vine and branches, and its application, we will pass on to notice that its introduction by our Lord, in this fifteenth chapter of John, was for a practical application, principally to impress the more forcibly his admonitions on those members of himself whom he recognizes as the branches of the vine. Having premised that the vine is Christ, in his mystical body, the church; and the branches of the vine are the members of Christ, being members of his body, members of his church, and members one of another, he says to his members, the branches, “Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.” For a branch to abide in the vine it must be identified with it, as a part of it, deriving all its vitality and vigor from the parent vine. The figure is full of instruction. We all know that a branch cut off, or separated, from the vine must wither and cease to bear fruit. What is it then to abide in Christ and bear fruit; and what is it for a branch to abide not in the vine, be cut off, wither, be gathered of men, and cast into the fire, and be burned? To abide in Christ implies a restriction to certain limits which are not to be transcended, all beyond which is forbidden ground. As he is the vine, our vitality and fruitfulness depends upon our abiding in him. To all the members of his body, the church, her exact boundaries are immutably staked out. Not

one of her stakes shall ever be removed. Not one of her cords shall ever be broken. They mark and define the curtains of our habitation in Christ, beyond which we may not go; they measure to us the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ. To exceed these stakes which God has set is to depart from Christ as our abiding place. These stakes, cords, or measurements, are designed to signify the laws, ordinances, doctrine, examples, precepts, admonitions and instructions which are found in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Hence, in the connection, Jesus explains to his disciples what it is to abide in him; thus "if ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love." This and other explanatory expressions of our Lord, in the same chapter, very clearly show in what sense he speaks of his members' abiding in him as the true vine. We cannot be thrown out of, or cut off from, our election in him, which was before the foundation of the world; for that would be to overthrow the sovereign, immutable and eternal choice, purpose and predestination of God; for "whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son." A failure in this would disarrange and indeed destroy the divine government; but a separation from his mystical body, the church, or vine, may be effected by disobedience to his commands, departure from his doctrine, or by a rejection of his words; or by disorderly deportment. To keep, or abide in his commandments is to abide in his love. So abiding we shall observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded us. Without his instruction, or authority, we will turn neither to the right hand nor to the left. To abide in him, in his word, his house, his church, his laws, and ordinances, mean that we remain permanently in them. Not as visitors, or occasional guests, but permanently settled and established in them. Ruth was admonished to *abide* in the field of Boaz, close by the reapers, which signified that she was to glean in no other field. It is said of anti-christ that

“Her feet abide not in her house (Proverbs 7:11).” But the abiding branch or member will say, “Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem (Psalm 122:2).” “They that dwell in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty (Psalm 91:1).” To go beyond the word of the Lord, to do what he has not commanded, or to leave undone what he has commanded, is to depart from him. To embrace doctrine which he has not taught, or to repudiate doctrine which he has taught in his word, is a departure from him in the sense of our figure. If we abide in him, that is, in his word, in his love, in his doctrine, then he also abideth in us. That is, his word abides permanently in us, his love abides in our hearts, as the life and sap of the vine abides in and invigorates the branches, so when his members go not out of his word, but keep within the precincts which environs his kingdom, then he, in his word, laws, love, life and healthful presence, by all the fruits of his Holy Spirit, dwells in us as the sap of the vine flows to all the branches fructifying and invigorating them. As Christ and his Word, his Spirit, his truth and grace are inseparable, if they abide in us it is because he abides in us. But if they abide not in us, then neither does he, in this sense, abide in us.

The branch, whether we apply the term to a single Christian or to a branch of the kingdom of Christ (for it can apply to none other) that abides in Christ, and Christ in him, or her, the same bringeth forth much fruit. “And herein,” says Christ, “is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.” The fruits of this abiding union with Christ, the true vine, are the legitimate fruits of the vine, which are “love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.” And these are the true clusters of the true vine, very unlike the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah, whose grapes are gall, and whose clusters are bitter, the wine of which is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps

(Deuteronomy 32:32,33), as we have painfully witnessed during the last four or five years. But these fruits of the true vine, borne by the branches which abide in Christ, are fruits which are unto holiness, whereby the Father, the Husbandman of the vine, is declaratively glorified. The love abounding in all the abiding branches is the love of God, shed abroad in them through Christ the vine; their faith is the faith of the Son of God who hath loved them and given himself for them. Their peace is from God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Their joy is in the Holy Ghost. So their gentleness, goodness, meekness, and all their fruits are of God, for "their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." None of these grapes can be gathered from thorns or thistles, nor can the Christian bear them, only so far as he abides in the vine. The people of Israel, married to Moses, brought forth fruit gendering to bondage; but being now dead to the law by the body of Christ, the true vine, they are lawfully married to him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruits unto God.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 312 - 316

JOHN 15:6

(Concluded)

"If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

The very same acts performed by any others than the children of God would neither develop fruits of the true vine nor could they glorify God. Who hath required these things at the hands of those who are not branches of the true vine? It is not keeping the commandments of Christ for unbelievers to be baptized; for those who know not God to profess religion; for those whom he has not authorized to preach, even if they should preach the truth. Nor are any of the laws of the kingdom of Christ enjoined on the ungodly. The obedience of the saints is the obedience of faith, and without faith it is impossible to please God. And all men have not faith. The son of the bond-woman was but a slave, although begotten by Abraham, nor could he ever be an heir with the son of the free-woman. Fruits produced by Christians are not fruits of the Spirit, unless they are fruits of vital union with the living vine. They are but the fruits of the flesh if produced independently of the true vine. And against all the fruits of the flesh there is law. The law is as weak through the flesh to produce fruits unto God, as Abraham was weak through Hagar to fulfill the promise of God that Sarah should have a son.

Christians sometimes make powerful efforts to do something for the Lord. But if they do what he has not commanded, their doings cannot be accepted of God, or if they do even what he has commanded, and do it from any other spirit or

influence than that which comes to them through the vine, it is unavailing. For instance, Christ has commanded his children to pray; but how often do they ask and receive not, because they ask amiss? This they are sure to do if they breathe forth any other than the aspirations of the Spirit in their prayer; they ask only for things that they may consume them on their carnal lusts, and God, in great mercy to them, refuses to grant them their desires. But when the healing virtues of the vine inspires them, they ask only for such things as God has in store for them. The Spirit, through the vine, maketh intercession for them according to the will of God, and then their prayers ascend like holy incense before the Lord. To abide in Christ, the true vine is, then:

First: To abide in his Spirit; and this requires that they be born of the Spirit, "because the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." The saints, in abiding in that Spirit, must crucify the old man with his deeds, and be governed by, and walk in the Spirit, and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

Second: They must abide in his love; for no other than that love which God has shed abroad in them will do. To abide in his love requires that they shall put from them the affections as well as the lusts of the flesh, and if they walk in the love of God they will love God supremely, and his people, his word, his service, and all that is approved of God himself, and lovely in his estimation.

Third: To abide in Christ as the true vine is to abide in his Word. He said, when lifting up his eyes to heaven, and addressing the Father, "I have given them thy word, and they have received it, and the world has hated them," etc. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth."

Fourth: They in abiding in his word abide in his truth, because the word is truth. All who depart from his word depart also from the truth, and abide not in the vine.

Fifth: They must abide in his law; that law which he hath written in their hearts: cheerfully obeying his precepts, and submitting to its authority in all things.

Sixth: They must abide in his doctrine, as stated and expounded by the holy apostles. For we see that the primitive disciples continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer. They must abide in fellowship with the vine, strictly conforming to the rule which he has given for their doctrine and practice in all things.

Now, "If any man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch." A nominal membership, or connection with the vine is not sufficient to secure a permanent abode in the church of Christ, the true vine. In that typical vine which the Lord brought out of Egypt, and planted, and made a hedge around it, and built a vine press for it, etc., a fleshly qualification conforming to the law of a carnal commandment, and a strict performance of the ordinances in a worldly sanctuary would secure an abode. But in the true vine, the order and discipline which Christ has established will detect, not only those who are only foxes who seek to spoil the vine, but it will also exclude from fellowship and membership all such as depart from the laws and institutions of Christ and abide not in him. Those foxes are cast forth, or "taken" as foxes that spoil the vine; but those who are cast forth as branches must mean those who have stood identified with the vine itself. And is not this clearly the case, that those branches or churches, or members who have had the confidence and fellowship of the saints, when they depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; who

refuse to be governed by the laws of the kingdom, or oppose the doctrine of Christ, or walk after the flesh, and not after the spirit, abiding not in the vine, but going astray from the footsteps of Christ's flock, are in the due order of the house of God cast forth as branches? And do they not wither? That verdure and beauty which they once exhibited consumes away like a moth, and all that seemed lovely to them fades out, and they being no more in harmony and fellowship with the people of God, are expelled from communion and fellowship, and from membership in the organized church.

"And men gather them," etc. As men gather and burn the withered offcasts of a vine, so there are those in the world who watch for the halting of the professed followers of Christ, that they may gather them to feed the flame of their carnal passions, and if possible, use them as fuel to increase the fire of persecution against the church of God. The dry and withered trimmings of a vine will make a sudden blaze, a glaring light, and produce a momentary heat, but all soon dies out, leaving the withered, charred branches blacker, and more unlike the verdant parent vine than ever. So we have often seen the backsliding members of the church, when lured from the pathway of holiness, departing from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, when by the faithful application of the discipline of the church excluded from the fellowship of orderly Christians, and separated from the vine, cast forth and withered. And men do gather them, for they look for the sympathy of the world, and there are those who will join them in their bitterness against the church of God, and for a time the lurid flame burns fiercely against the church and people of God, and like the crackling noise of burning thorns utter their malicious but incoherent maledictions against the faithful defenders of the truth of God.

Those who have been cut off from the fellowship of the saints for their transgressions of the laws of Christ have frequently, for a season, manifested more bitterness against the vine from which they have been cut off than those have been want to show, into whose hands they have fallen, and by the accession which they make to the ever-burning fire of persecution, the furnace is, for a moment, made perhaps seven times hotter than it is wont to be heated.

But there is another sense in which those who abide not in Christ, in the sense explained in this figure, who by departing from his instructions, his laws, institutions, doctrine, examples, and from the communion and fellowship of his saints, are gathered and cast into the fire. God's children are not allowed to go into transgression unrebuked. When cast forth and withered, as excluded branches from the parent vine, they suffer the burning fire of divine disapprobation. They are cast into a place of discomfort and unrest; where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched, in which their beauty is consumed as a moth, and their comeliness becomes as ashes to them. How indescribably distressing must be the condition of a branch of the true vine, a child of God who has tasted of the heavenly gift, and of the joys of the world to come, who has enjoyed the companionship of dear loving brethren and sisters, who has shared with them all the privileges of the house of God, to be cut off from the vine, cast forth from fellowship, gathered up like a withered branch, joined to a citizen of a foreign country, far from his father's house, in wretchedness and famine of soul, reduced to such extreme want that he fain would fill himself with that which only the swine can eat.

Practical illustrations of this part of our Lord's parable are not infrequent. When those who have enjoyed the privileges of the church of God have become disaffected, have grown cold in their appreciation of the society of the saints, cease to

prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy, and allured by some sensual bait from the doctrine, practice or order of the house of God; become indifferent to the confidence and fellowship of their brethren, reject their counsel, spurn their admonitions and shun their company. In their wanderings from the footsteps of the flock, they become charmed with some gilded illusion which seems to promise them present gratification, they are taken in the fowler's snare, and soon become wedded to some idol. They follow the leadings of their carnal mind until alienated in their feelings and affections from their fellow-branches of the vine, bid defiance to the authority of Christ in his church, and madly throw off all restraints, assume to be independent of the church or vine in which they had once seemed verdant and fruitful. The commands of Christ are disobeyed, and his authority disregarded until the discipline of the church demands their expulsion from the vine or church. Now they are withered, barren of those fruits of the Spirit in which they once seemed to abound; like the salt which has lost its savory qualities by becoming filthy, thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast forth, and trodden under foot of men. In this condition men gather them. Men of the world of anti-christ, who feel malicious towards the vine, hail with fiendish gusto their apostasy from the faith and order of the gospel, and give them a warm reception. The powers of darkness exult in the momentary seeming triumph. But how soon the stolen waters grow bitter, the allurement fades, the promised gratification is not realized. The truant child begins to be in trouble. The easy down-hill-road from Jerusalem to Jericho is infested with thieves, and cruel merciless robbers are on the alert; the way of the transgressor is hard, the robbers strip him and wound him, and leave him half dead. The cup of promised pleasure is dashed. A famine has overtaken him, a storm has arisen, and his soul now vainly yearns within him for the tender sympathy of loving brethren; and, like Esau,

he seeks repentance, and a restoration of birthright blessings before despised and unappreciated.

"I die with hunger here, he cries,
I starve in foreign lands."

The society, and the element into which the prodigal has fallen is a burning furnace, and a devouring flame to every true branch of the vine, when separated from the fellowship and communion of the saints of God.

We know that the heirs of immortality cannot be so separated from Christ, or from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, as to cease to be children of God and joint heirs with Christ; all that being secured in Christ, independent of their good or bad works. Our abiding in Christ as our Savior, our Surety, our Everlasting Father, and as our Advocate with the Father is secured beyond the possibility of a failure. But to abide in him as the "True Vine," of which his Father is the Husbandman, is to abide in him as the embodiment of the true gospel church, in his laws, ordinances, order and communion. "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us (I John 3:24)." "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:10)." "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body ye shall live." For the child of God to abide in the flesh is to abide in death; "For the body is dead, because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness."

Middletown, N.Y.
April 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 316 – 321

JOHN XV. 22, 24

MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER BEEBE: – I propose to ask you a question, which I would be glad to have you explain through the SIGNS. If the whole human family fell in Adam, and are under the law of sin and death, why did Christ say, In John xv. 22, 24, "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin." "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both mean me and my Father"?

You brother in Christ, as I hope,
JOHN MORSE.
Jasper County, Texas, Jan. 6, 1880.

REPLY.– We are informed in the scriptures that, "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "For by one man's offense death reigned by one," &c. "Therefore as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." – Romans v. 12, 17, 18. "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." – 1 Cor. xv. 55. "For the wages of sin is death." – Rom. vi. 23. From these scriptures we learn that all the posterity of the earthy Adam are involved in the sin and guilt of Adam's one offense, and that the mortality in which we are involved is the wages of his one offense, for it is in Adam we all die. Our subjection to death is therefore conclusive evidence that we are involved in the sin of his transgression, and the seeds of depravity are fully developed in our natural propensity to sin continually.

We are not therefore at liberty to construe the words of our Lord so as to mean that those of whom he spake were exempt from the guilt of Adam's transgression, nor that his coming, and the works which he performed, were the cause

of their depravity; but rather that his coming and work had exposed the sinful state they were in by taking away their cloak in which they were disguised, and thus proving that with all their professions of piety and godliness they hated both him and his Father. Whatsoever maketh manifest is light; and in the concealment of darkness, and the disguise of their cloak, their hypocrisy in pretending to love God and holiness could not be detected and demonstrated until brought to the test of both seeing in the marvelous works of Jesus, and hating both him and his Father. This was an exposure of sin which they were already involved in, by proving that they hated both him and the Father. In the same form of speaking, Paul said, “I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet,” &c. The law did not make him sin, but it proved that he was a sinner.

Elder Gilbert Beebe – Editorial
Middletown, N. Y., February 1, 1880

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 3
February 1, 1880

JOHN XVI. 33.

“IN the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

The kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ being dissimilar to the world in its organization, spirit and institutions, can never by any art or device of man be made to harmonize in any treaty of peace that can be made; and indeed all amalgamation is forbidden. God has chosen and called the subjects of his spiritual kingdom out of the world, and enjoined on them that they shall not be conformed to the world, nor follow its fashions. The world, by wisdom, has utterly failed to know God, and the things of the Spirit are hidden from the wise and prudent of the world, and they are foolishness to every natural man; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. God alone can reveal them to the saints by his Spirit. The spirit of the world and the Spirit of the gospel are opposite; and hence it is that the world hateth the members of Christ, even as it has hated him. If they were of the world, the world would love its own; but as this is not the case, we cannot, as the subjects of our King, expect the favor or friendship of the world. The more we are enabled to exhibit, in our doctrine, ordinances, walk and conversation, the image of our Savior, the more opposition from the world we may expect; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. Wherefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of them that believe. The history of the world from the beginning shows that God’s people have been chosen in a furnace of affliction, and that the depraved powers of the human family have, from the days of Abel, been brought to bear against the religion of divine revelation, and against all who are subjected to its power and principles. Much of the tribulation incidental to the

children of God has been in the form of proscription and open persecution, reproach and violence, from the anti-christian powers of darkness, under various and multiform names and organizations, but much has also arisen from the conflicting elements, flesh and spirit, of which every member of the spiritual kingdom is composed. Not that flesh and blood can inherit the kingdom, for that cannot be; neither can corruption inherit incorruption. But those who are born of God, and are born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God that liveth and abideth forever, are still, notwithstanding the implantation within them of the incorruptible seed, and the development of its vitality, for the present, compassed about with the infirmities and depravity of our human nature, in consequence of our being still in these bodies of flesh, in which none of us have ever been able to find any good thing. Thus in the close connection in which our carnal and our spiritual natures are placed, it is impossible to avoid such collision as will make and perpetuate a warfare between them. These are contrary one to the other, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Who that has been born of God, has not felt the strong current of the natural corruption of their fleshly nature in opposition to all that is holy and heavenly within them? Or who of all the spiritual family has not felt that love to, and desire for holiness as to make them loathe the corruptions of their carnal nature? This constant conflict involves them in tribulation while in the world, for their fleshly bodies are made of that dust of the earth which is under the curse, and which is doomed to bring forth thorns and thistles, until it shall return thither. But it is a glorious consolation to know that when they shall be finally raised up from the dead at the last day, they shall be fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body, and raised in incorruption and immortality. It is right for us to mortify the deeds of the body, and to strive against sin; to crucify it with its lusts, but we can never repair, reform or new-model it so as to fashion it after the image of Christ, or destroy its corruptions so as to

bring it with us into the spiritual exercise or enjoyment of the kingdom of our Lord. God will subject it, but not yet; he will slay the enmity and deliver us from the bondage of corruption at his appointed time.

As a general thing the saints encounter their greatest opposition, and are subject to their bitterest trials and severest tribulations in this world, from the warfare which rages so incessantly within themselves. The old man, and the new man; the inner man, and the outward man, though personally identified in us here, are nevertheless distinct in nature, emanation, disposition and destiny. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

Of the various tribulations which the children of God experience, we may speak of those which appear to come upon us under the immediate providence of God. These will comprise our losses, bereavements, sicknesses, pains, poverty, darkness of mind and subjection to the temptations of the wicked one. Not that we would for a moment allow that any tribulation could assail us independently of the providence of our God, but some of our afflictions in the world seem to us more clearly and manifestly providential than others, and in this sense we speak of them. There were those among the ancients who sighed and wept because of the abominations which prevailed in Israel, and when we who love the gates of Zion, and pray for her prosperity, witness disorder, and distress, in the church of God, and a disposition to bite and devour one another, we feel ready to exclaim with the holy prophet, “O, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the hurt of the daughter of my people.” But these afflictions, grievous and painful as they may seem, are only for a season. In heaven no disorders will be seen, no waxing cold of the love of the saints; no waste places of Zion will be

known, for “not a wrinkle or a spot shall her beauteous form deface.”

Although the kingdom of our Lord is not of this world, it is in the world, surrounded by the world and its vanities, its bewitching allurements, and its corrupting influences, its perplexing anxieties, and its corroding cares, and like a city which is set upon a hill, it occupies an elevated and conspicuous position. “As the lily among thorns; so is she among the daughters, and as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.” She has no right to expect solid comfort or substantial peace from any other source than from Jesus her Lord. “In me,” he says, “ye shall have peace.” Then may we well “Be of good cheer,” even the tribulations that we endure, are for our good; and under his mighty hand they shall all be turned to our advantage; working patience and experience, and hope which maketh not ashamed. We know that they work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not on the things which are seen, which are temporal; but on the things which are not seen, which are eternal. He is our peace. He has overcome the world, and we are destined to share with him the victory. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith; for the faith of the saint, is the faith of Jesus Christ. He is both the author and the finisher of it; and we live by the faith of the Son of God who hath loved us, and given himself for us. Certainly it was in his mediatorial character, as the Head over all things to his church, that he encountered the opposition of the world, and grappled with the powers of darkness. Had he failed in the conflict, hope must have fled forever from us. But be of good cheer; the world is overcome, death destroyed, sin is put away, and all things put under his feet. The conquering Savior is exalted, and in his mediatorial glory he shall reign until the last enemy shall be destroyed. This is then our consolation; this is then our good cheer. The risen Savior has

gone up to heaven with a shout, and the everlasting gates have been lifted up for his triumphal entrance; the heavens have received him, until the restitution of all things spoken by the prophets since the world began; and· thence shall he also come at the end of time, to raise the dead and judge the world. This is good cheer, the very best of cheer to heaven-born children. Weak as we are, trembling and incompetent to meet and vanquish our foes alone, "Cry unto Jerusalem, that her warfare is accomplished." Jesus our Lord has taken the field, met and fulfilled all the requisitions of the law on our behalf, disarmed death of his sting and of his terrors, led captivity captive; and now in full power and majesty sits on his imperial throne; angels and principalities being subject to him. The stormy winds are in his hand, and all judgment committed to him, and he ever lives to make intercession for his saints. What better cheer could we ask than this? What are worldly honors, wealth or fame, length of days, or tents of ease, compared with that the Lord has provided for the cheer of his saints? It is vanity of vanities. Therefore we are brought to the conclusion that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 93 - 97

JOHN XVII. 5.

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

These words were addressed by our Lord Jesus Christ to the Father, but a very short time before he was delivered up into the hands of his enemies to be crucified. Already, as the preceding connection of our text records, he had for the last time eaten the passover with his disciples, given the sop to Judas, and Judas was at this very time negotiating with the enemies to betray his Lord into their hands. The supper, commemorative of that dreadful night, or rather of the events of that time had been instituted, the bread had been broken, and the wine, which was to signify his blood in the New Testament, had been drank, the solemn hymn had been sung, and the solitary retreat to the Mount of Olives gained, and the last instructions to his disciples which they were to receive before his death had been imparted. This done, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and addressed the Father, and in that address used the words of our text, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

To know the deep emotion of his soul, or to describe the bitterness of that cup, which was pressed to his lips, the dregs of which he must drink before he could enter into his glory, is beyond the ability of men or angels to describe. But while his words express his desire to the Father, they are also full of instruction to his people.

It is thought by many, that this and similar prayers of our Redeemer, were addressed by the humanity of Christ to his divinity, or that as the second distinct person in the Godhead, the prayer was addressed to the first person of the trinity of persons. Neither of these views are clear to our

understanding. If by human nature is intended that flesh which he was made, when he was made of a woman, or that which was born of the virgin, for in whatever sense Christ is identified in uttering this prayer, in that very identity he had before his incarnation been glorified with the Father's own self, and had come out from the Father, manifestly as the Son of God, for so he had manifested this secret to the men whom the Father had given him out of the world, and they had known surely that he came out from the Father, and believed that the Father sent him. (See verses six, seven and eight.) None, we presume, will claim that what is commonly called the human nature of Christ, came out from the Father, in the sense here expressed, but that in this sense his humanity evidently sprang out of Judah.

2. If we take the other view, that it was as the second person of the Trinity, he came out from, and was sent by the Father, another difficulty meets us, in which we are unable to reconcile his perfect and eternal equality with the Father in the eternal Godhead, with his emanation or his coming out from, and the subordination to the Father, or asking his petition of the Father. But, in perfect harmony with the Bible doctrine of his full equality with the Father in eternal Godhead, and his incarnation in which he took part of the same flesh and blood which his children are partakers of, we learn from the Scriptures that he stood in mediatorial relation both to the Father and the church, as the Day's Man who could lay his hand on both, and that it was in reference to his mediatorial sonship that he said he had come out from the Father, and that he was sent by the Father, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and to finish the work. As the mediatorial Head and life of the church which is his body, he had all that glory with the Father before the world was, which in our text he asks for, and has received, and shall possess when this world shall be no more. Before the world was, he was glorified with the Father's own self, and he

is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and express image of his person. For the word was with God, and the word was God, and he who was the word was put to death in the flesh, bear the sins of his people in his own body, and God was manifest in the flesh. And when his body was locked in the cold embrace of death and the grave, his flesh saw no corruption, in that self-same body he was raised from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, and in that risen and glorified body he has now the glory of eternal, uncreated, underived, unbegotten, selfexistent, independent and everlasting Godhead, which he had with the Father before the world was, no more, nor any less, is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever. Thus, to us, he is clearly the God Man, and Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, the Man of God’s right hand, whom he hath made strong for himself, the anointed of the Father, the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

“Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended, first into the lower parts of the earth?” When he descended, he that was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich. He took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience, and filled the character of a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, poured out his strong cries and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and finally poured out his soul unto death, and in doing so cried with a loud voice, “It is finished!” and yielded up the ghost. But having now suffered these things, he must enter into his glory, which is the glory of the Father’s own self, which he had with the Father before the world was. For this joy which was set before him he endured the cross, despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of the throne of God. Thus it behooved him to suffer, and then to enter into his glory, where,

"No more the bloody spear -
The cross and nails no more,"

shall ever pierce his hands, his feet, his heart. He is now made higher than the heavens, and reigns forever on the throne with the Father.

"Though they are known by different names,
The Father God, and God the Son,"

yet so inseparable and identical that he that hath seen the Son hath seen the Father also, for he is in the Father, and the Father is in him.

One consideration more we will notice briefly in closing this article. The appeal in our text embodies the perfect intercession of Christ as based on the perfect work which he had completed, and this he asks, knowing that he is always heard. The consummation of the mediatorial glory of the Son of God, is not to add unto him one single member, that was not in him when he was set up in mediatorial headship over all things to his church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all. He prays not for the world, but for them whom the Father had given him out of the world; and he prays that they may be one with him, even as he and his Father are one. This intercessory prayer is according to the immutable will of the Father; and, therefore, when all the saints shall be brought into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the fullness of the measure of the stature of Christ, he will have the same glory, in his members as well as in identity with the Father in eternal Godhead, that he had before the word was, and no more. Or, in other words, he had the same glory before the world was, in all respects, as he asks for or desires.

Such are our views on this sublime and heavenly subject, compare them with the infallible standard of truth, and if they be not sustained by the Scriptures, cast them from you, but if you find them clearly sustained by the Scriptures, bind them to your heart, and rejoice

"That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity."

Middletown, N. Y.
Feb. 15, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 301 - 304

JONAH I. 5,6.

If not asking too much, please give your views on Jonah i, 5,6: "Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man to his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not."

I remain your unworthy sister in the gospel,
SARAH W. SMITH.
Edgar Co., Ill., Jan. 4, 1859.

Reply. – We have no special light on this portion of the divine record, but a few thoughts occur to our mind in being thus called to examine the text.

First, Jonah, although a subject of saving grace, born of God and taught by the Spirit, and inspired by the Spirit of Christ which was in him as a prophet of the Lord, had a carnal, peevish, fretful and rebellious nature, which led him to disobey the command of God, and seek to run away from a duty which God enjoined on him. He doubtless had in common with all the saints, while in the earthly house of their pilgrimage, a law in his members warring against the law of his mind. The Spirit of Christ, which Peter says was in the prophets of the Lord, was unquestionably in him, for Christ has himself pronounced him a prophet of the Lord, and that Spirit of Christ is never rebellious to the will of God. As exemplified in the Redeemer himself: "Lo! I come to do thy will, O God." And in all the saints to will is present, and the Spirit of Christ in them inspires a desire to be in subordination to the will of God, their heavenly Father, but

like Jonah they all have also an earth-born nature which is earthly, sensual and rebellious.

Second. The complete control which God has, not only over his disobedient saints, prophets included, but also over superstitious idolators, who seem to had each a favorite deity to whom they poured forth their fruitless prayers and supplications, and a supreme power also over the winds of heaven, the billows of the sea, and monsters of the deep, all of which, when it is Jehovah's pleasure, are called in to requisition for the chastisement of his disobedient children, and for the execution of the orders of his unshaken throne.

Third. What a lesson is here of the reckless presumption and careless indifference of the wayward and rebellious child of God, when for a few hours permitted to pursue their own course of disobedience. When the heavens were black with storm and tempest, when the sea was agitated and rolling her foaming billows to the skies, and the ship unable to bear the tempest, required to be relieved of its lading, and while the affrighted idolators were calling every man upon his god, where was Jonah? Not calling on his God, not suing for mercy, not pleading for forgiveness nor confessing his disobedience. All the elements of nature could feel and shudder at his wickedness, all the mariners could tremble with horror, all, all but Jonah could feel, but he was fast asleep! And are there not more Jonahs than one in this day who can respond to the language of the poet.

"The rocks can rend, the earth can quake,
The seas can roar, the mountains shake,
Of feeling all things shew some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine."

Fourth. Why is this case of Jonah left on record? Not only to complete the prophetic sign of the prophet Jonah, who in his

dreary wanderings in the dreadful deep, should describe the three days and three nights sojourn of our Lord in death's domains, but as an admonition to all the disobedient children of God throughout all time. How vain to think of running away from God, or of eluding his pursuit. Should we take the wings of the morning and fly beyond the most distant sea, or mount to heaven, or sink to hell, we cannot hide from him, or thwart his purpose and decree. Well may we all remember and lay to our heart the words of Samuel to Ahab: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken, than the fat of rams."

"Order my footsteps by thy word,
And make my soul sincere;
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
But keep my conscience clear.
Make me to walk in thy commands,
'Tis a delightful road;
Nor let my head, nor heart, nor hands,
Offend against my God."

Middletown, N.Y.,
April 1, 1859

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 211 – 213

JOSEPH, A TYPE OF CHRIST.

"Was Joseph, the son of Jacob, a type of Christ? If so, in what respects?"
THOMAS GUICE.

WE have regarded Joseph as a type of Christ in the following particulars, viz:

1st. As the first-born of Jacob by his beloved Rachel. Leah, with her defective visage and weak eyes, was a suitable figure of the old covenant Israel, which the law required should be first recognized in her marriage covenant relation to God. With all her tinkling ornaments, worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, the Jewish church could not, even with nitre and much soap, or with all the blood of bulls and goats which constantly streamed from her altars, wash out the blemishes and defects of her ugly countenance, nor assume the lovely visage of the beautiful Rachel. All false prophets and idol gods, which had labored to improve her dull and listless eyes, had failed to so improve her sight as to enable her to see the kingdom of God, or to discern the things of the Spirit of God. She could not discern the signs of the times, nor did she know the things which belonged to her peace. She knew not the Son of God, nor could she see any comeliness or beauty in him that she could love or admire. True she was prolific, and increased the number of Jacob's fleshly family, and prided herself as much in this as do her workmongrel connections at the present time.

Rachel who was well-favored and beautiful, presents a clear and brilliant figure of the gospel church under the new covenant dispensation. Her eyes were like doves' eyes within her locks, and with one of them she delighted the heart of her Beloved. See Cant. iv. 1, 9. Kings and prophets desired to see the things which she sees, and were not able. She is

the perfection of beauty, and her God will behold no spot or defect in her. As Lear represented the carnal race of Israel, so Rachel represents the spiritual church, and Christ is her firstborn. First Begotten from the dead; for, although she had long been derided for her barrenness, at length, Unto her a child is born; unto her a Son is given; and the government is on his shoulder, and his name is Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

2d. Joseph was not born until the fourteen years of legal obligation between Jacob and Laban were accomplished; so the law and prophets were until John, in whose days the ad vent of Christ occurred. And in reference to the canceling of all the demands of law and justice, and abolition of the hand writing of ordinances, they were accomplished when Christ died and nailed them to the cross. But in the espousal of the gospel church, or anti-typical Rachel, Christ in his resurrection became the first fruits of them that slept, and the first born among many brethren. In his being made of a woman, and born of the virgin, he came to "his own," nationally; but in his resurrection from the dead he was born unto Rachel, or the Jerusalem which is above, not under the law; she is free. And she is also the mother of Benjamin, or of all who are, as Isaac was, children of the promise.

3d. In being despised and rejected by his brethren, Joseph was a type of Christ. Joseph came to his brethren, as sent by his father, to see how they fared, and they received him not as the messenger of their father, but conspired to take away his life. So Christ came to his own, and his own received him not; they conspired to slay him, and did with wicked hands crucify and slay him. Joseph's brethren passed sentence upon him, and consigned him to the pit; the Jews passed sentence on Christ and consigned him to the tomb, from whence he arose, as Joseph was also raised from the pit.

4th. Joseph, in being sold to a company of Ishmaelitish stock-jobbers by his brethren, may well illustrate the merchandise which Judaizing teachers, legal work-mongers and others, are carrying on in converting sinners for money, qualifying them to preach for money, and delivering Christ, or eternal life nominally to Ishmaelites to peddle out in Egypt, or the house of bondage, for fat salaries. There being as many Ishmaelitish merchantmen now engaged in religious speculation as formerly; and they are now laboring as hard as then to get Christ in his word, in his children, and in his work, to a lucrative market. If they can purchase him, or a polite education for the ministry, for thirty pieces of silver, they can exchange their stock in Sodom and Egypt at advance to suit their covetous desires.

5th. Joseph's history in the house of Potiphar is not without its counterpart among religious merchantmen; Potiphar's wife did not think much of such restrictions as election, predestination, special union or relationship; a stolen embrace was equally valuable in her judgment, and like thousands in the present age, who are endeavoring to storm heaven, determined to have Christ; caring not whether their relationship to Potiphar or Moses is dissolved or not, or whether the demands of the law are canceled, or they dead to the law as a husband or not, conclude that their physical power shall supply what they lack in fascinating attractions, and they lay hold violently on the garments or external show of christianity, and when they find that it is not possible to bring the religion of heaven to their terms, they will raise the shout of persecution, and madly strive to destroy that grace, which they cannot enjoy. How many thousand Potiphar's wives there are, and have ever been since the coming of Christ, who seek to be christians in an unlawful way. Many of them came to John's baptism and were rejected, others desired to take Christ by force and make him king. Some have confidently affirmed that it is a matter of indifference

with our spiritual Joseph who becomes his bride, or whether they have living husbands or not; if they will love him he will love them; if they will choose him, and lay hold of his garment with a determination not to let go, an exchange of souls is offered if such are not successful. And are they not somewhat akin to Potiphar's lady, who hold that the church is under the law as a rule of life - those who hold that the old Abrahamic covenant is still in force, that baptism supplies the place of circumcision, and the first day of the week the place of the seventh day Sabbath which God enjoined on national Israel to be observed throughout their generations?

6. The object which God had in sending Joseph to Egypt to lay up corn, and to provide for the famine, and for the salvation of his father's house, is emblematic of the purpose of grace developed in the coming of Christ nuder the law his Mediatorial work, and the provisions by him made foil the deliverance of his church from wrath, famine and death. In the case of Joseph's persecutions, effected by the wicked hands and more wicked hearts of his brethren, they meant it for evil, but God designed it for good, and caused it to result in good to the house of Jacob, according to his purpose; so Christ, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, his brethren (nationally) with wicked hands did crucify and slay him. Nevertheless through death he destroyed death, and in his resurrection he brought immortality to light.

7. The name which was given him by the king, Zaphnathpaaneah, which signifies one who discovers hidden things, or a revealer of secrets, certainly expressed something of the figurative connection between him and Christ.

8. The necessity laid on Jacob's house to go to Joseph for bread, when it was not possible to obtain it from any other

quarter, shows, in the figure, how God brings a famine on all the spiritual Israelites when quickened, and they can find life and salvation no where else.

9. The money and presents which they carried with them with which to obtain favor and buy corn, came back in their sacks' mouths, as when a quickened soul takes with him all the treasures of repentance, grief, confession, supplication, humility and such other commodities as he has, he finds they will not buy corn, nor procure favor with Christ, but all is sent back in the mouth of the sack.

10. The experience of every child of God will show that the manner in which Joseph received and treated his brethren, when from their necessities they were compelled to apply to him for sustenance, agrees well with what they realized when they were convinced that there was salvation for them in no other than Christ. Like Jacob's sons, they only knew Jesus as a sovereign, who was able to save, but on whom they had no claim; they knew him not as a brother, a friend, or as one nearly allied in relationship. From dire necessity they came trembling before him, supposing that he was as ignorant of them as they were of him; but he knew them well, and turned aside to conceal from them his emotion; and while his heart was moved in tenderness towards them, he spake to them roughly. He concealed himself from them as their brother, savior and friend, until they were sufficiently humbled, until the remembrance of all their wickedness stared them in the face; and at the moment when they looked for retributive justice for their sins, Joseph stood before them in all the tender affection of a brother, and said, "I am Joseph, your brother!" and gave them convincing evidence of the truth of his words, and assured them that God had sent him to save them. If in all this the christian can find nothing illustrative of the manner in which Jesus was

made known to him, we shall have occasion to confess that we have erred.

11. Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, who inherited the patriarchal distinction of Joseph, were blessed of Jacob in a very peculiar manner: the younger receiving the greater blessing, and thus figuratively showing that the portion of Christ's seed which were eldest, or the people of God under the Old Testament dispensation, were not blessed with the gospel privileges which distinguish the church under the gospel dispensation. In this also we think Joseph was a figure of Christ.

12. As Joseph dying in Egypt gave directions for the removal of his body to the promised land, and certain prediction that God would visit his brethren and bring them up out of Egypt, so Christ, who was crucified in the spiritual Sodom and Egypt, made provision for the deliverance of all his mystical body, the church, for whose sake he had sojourned in Egypt, which is the bone of his bones, and the flesh of his flesh; and gave abundant assurance that God would surely visit his spiritual Israel, and in due time bring them into the experimental inheritance of the privileges of the gospel, so that not a hoof should be left in the land of bondage.

We have noticed several particulars in which it has appeared to us that Joseph was a type of our Redeemer; if our views, are satisfactory to brother Guice, he is welcome to them; and if they are not satisfactory, we have no disposition to enforce them.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
Jan. 15, 1847.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 731 - 736

JUDGES 5:23

In our last number, our brother and sister, William and Mary White, present their request for our views on Judges 5:23.

“Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.”

These words occur in the song of Deborah and Barak, in which they praise God for the glorious victories which he had given them over Sisera the commander of the army of Jabin, King of Canaan. The circumstances of the case are thus stated; The children of Israel had sinned, and done evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, for a chastisement for their transgressions. Being unable to withstand the superior forces of Jabin, and his mighty army, his skillful General and his nine hundred chariots of iron, they after twenty years of severe suffering cried unto the Lord for help, and the Lord directed Deborah, who at that time judged Israel, and was also a prophetess, to call Barak, and with him ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulon, and with this comparatively small force to “go and draw toward Mount Tabor.” And the Lord promised that he would draw unto her, Sisera, the captain of Jabin’s army, to the river Kishon, with his chariots and his multitudes, and deliver them into her hand.

Of Meroz, which seems to have been a village near the brook Kishon, we have but very little account, but from the anathema pronounced in the text, it appears that the inhabitants of that place did not listen to the word of the Lord, as spoken by Deborah, and came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The arminians have frequently referred to this passage with an air of exultation to prove

that the Lord God of Israel is sometimes in want of help, - that his purposes require for their execution the use of means, the help of man, and that when men fail to lend an helping hand to the Lord they deserve the bitter curses which are in this case denounced against Meroz and its inhabitants. This text has been relied on by the advocates of all the modern religious institutions for evangelizing the world. They would have us believe the Lord is endeavoring to convert the heathen and bring on the millennium; that he is wooing and beseeching sinners to consent to be saved on certain terms and conditions, and that the success of his gracious designs depends very much on the amount of aid afforded him by the sons of men. That those generous souls, who put forth their hands to help him secure the ark, will not be subject to the curse of Meroz. Help is, in their estimation, needed in the formation of benevolent societies such as Mission, Tract, Sabbath School, Temperance, Abolition, Penny and Mite Societies, - That with sufficient help of this kind the heathen may be converted to God, and the world speedily evangelized. That those who are engaged in these are really coming to the help of the Lord, and will be blessed for their seasonable help, and generous contributions, but those who stand aloof from them will share the anathema of Meroz and the inhabitants thereof. But does this text favor that idea? Let us carefully examine. In the case of Meroz, who was to be helped, God or Meroz? Were the inhabitants to be cursed for failing to help the Lord? Was the Lord, or Israel, in trouble requiring help? Did the Lord call on Israel to help him subdue the army of Jabin, or was it not the children of Israel who were oppressed by Jabin, and being unable to deliver themselves, after being sorely oppressed twenty years, called on the Lord to help them? Did the Lord come down from heaven to receive help from Deborah, Barak, or their ten thousand men? How absurd, not to say blasphemous, to talk of helping the Omnipotent God, who weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance who taketh up the islands as

a very little thing. If it were possible for him to need any help, what could puny mortals do to assist him? Behold he sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers, that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in, that bringeth the princes to nothing and maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span. All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him less than nothing and vanity. How much can these wonderful grasshoppers do to assist the Almighty God? What aid could these minute particles of less than nothing and vanity render to him who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy? How very natural it is for poor vain man to forget that he is but dust and ashes and fancy that he can do exploits.

The subject before us must be plain to the candid reader. It was the children of Israel who needed help, and cried to the Lord for help; and the Lord signified to Deborah that he would render them the help they desired, at a special time and place; and commanded Deborah to come with Barak and ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulon and receive the help of the Lord at or near Mount Tabor. They went to the place as the Lord commanded, and found The Help of Israel and the Savior thereof in the time of trouble was there, they received the help of the Lord, and were delivered from their enemies, and their oppressors were slain.

But Meroz, we suppose like our modern arminians, despised the help of the Lord, and still had confidence in their own ability to take care of themselves. At all events they came not to the help of the Lord. Why they came not, we are not informed; but it is natural to suppose they were all arminians, and could easier entertain the idea of helping the Lord than of being helped and saved by him.

As the inhabitants of Meroz despised the help of the Lord in the days of Deborah the prophetess, so the will worshipers of our day and all the workmongrel tribes of the earth in all ages, have vainly imagined themselves able to help themselves, and it is very apparent from their activity and zeal in multiplying what they call Benevolent Institutions for saving the heathen and converting the world, that they believe the Lord needs their help to sustain his cause and execute his work, much more than they feel themselves in want of help from him.

Indeed we have never known them to apply this text in any other way than to represent the Lord as suffering for the want of help, and bitterly cursing those who come not up to help him. We pity those deluded souls who are so infatuated as to imagine that the adorable God who sustains the Universe, who does his pleasure in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth can need to be himself sustained by any of the creatures that he has made.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 447 – 450

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

(Reply to brother J. F. White)

The text proposed for consideration is II Corinthians 5:10: "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." The italicized words are supplied by the translators. A general impression has prevailed that the judgment seat of Christ is a seat at present unoccupied, on which Christ shall be seated when the earth and heavens shall have passed away, and the graves of all the families of the earth shall deliver up their slumbering tenants. Then all the tribes of mankind shall be summoned to appear in his august presence; that then he shall vacate the mercy seat, and assume the judgment seat to adjudicate the case and determine the final destiny of all the children of men. In this theory is necessarily involved the supposition that the saints and glorified spirits in heaven, and all who are now, or shall at that period be suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, shall from heaven and hell assemble in resurrected bodies reproduced in form and nature as when they were on earth. Each shall then and there be subjected to a judicial examination, and receive from the Judge a reward for their righteous acts, or a sentence of wrath for their wickedness, proportioned in strict justice to the amount of merit or demerit in which they shall be found. The text on which we are requested to give our views has been relied on, perhaps more than any other, in support of the above stated theory. Christians being the only class that can find nothing at all meritorious in themselves to plead, and everything that is vile and sinful in their nature to loath and abhor, have been perplexed and sometimes even

terror-stricken in the fearful apprehension that the heart-searching and rein-trying Judge, at that awful day, will find them as guilty and sinful as they now feel themselves to be, and will bid them depart from his presence to everlasting burnings. Nor would such dismal apprehensions be unwarranted if the views presented in the foregoing were sustained in the Scriptures of truth; for the Psalmist has said, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand (Psalm 130:3)." Again, "Blessed is he whom transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity (Psalm 32:1,2)."

The subject presented by our brother involves the following considerations: First, the judgment seat of Christ. Second, who must appear before it? When, and for what purpose? Our firm conviction on the subject is that our Lord Jesus Christ is now occupying his judgment seat, and all judgment is vested in him. "In righteousness he doth judge and make war (Revelation 19:11)." "All power is given unto him in heaven and in earth (Matthew 28:18)." "Power is given to him over all flesh, that he should give eternal life unto as many as the Father has given him (John 17:2)." The judgment seat, however, of which the apostle is speaking in our text, is that on which he presides, as the Head over all things to his church. As it is written, "The Lord shall judge his people (Hebrews 10:30)." His judgment seat is his throne; and God has said, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion (Psalm 2:6)." "For the Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our law-giver, the Lord is our King; he will save us (Isaiah 33:22)." "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from the other, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats (Matthew 25:31,32)." When our Redeemer had finished transgressions and made

an end of sin, when he had met and canceled all the demands of law and justice, redeemed his people from the curse and also from the dominion of the law, he was exalted with the right hand of the Father, sat down with him in his throne, and is forever sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. He has received his kingdom, and is inaugurated in power, and has ascended his mediatorial throne, which is the seat of his judgment. In his kingdom he spreads his throne. It stands in Zion, and justice and judgment are the habitation of it forever. In his gospel church he holds his court, and bringeth forth judgment unto victory. If the church of God is not the judgment seat of Christ, we know not where to find it. "Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops; he hath laid siege against us; they shall smite the Judge of Israel with the rod upon the cheek. But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting (Micah 5:1,2)." We cannot believe that he who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, changes from place to place, from seat to seat. He has set down forever upon his throne, and his throne is his mercy seat, and it is also his judgment seat, and all his decisions are as immutable, irrevocable and decisive now as they can ever be at any subsequent period. When he said unto the dear child of God, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," that judgment was officially rendered, and firmly as the pillars of his throne shall that decision stand when earth and heaven shall have fled away.

Having, as we conceive, fully demonstrated that the church of God is the judgment seat of Christ; that Zion is the "Holy Hill" on which God has set his King, and that a glorious high throne from the beginning is the place of our Sanctuary, we may contemplate with joy and gratitude its exalted altitude. Higher than the heavens, and lasting as eternity. "For unto

the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

Two. Let us now inquire to whom it is said in our text: "For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ." The epistle in which these words are written is thus addressed: "Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, with all the saints which are in Achaia;" and these are still further described as a people who know that they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A people who groan in the earthly house of this tabernacle, and who earnestly desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven; and still further, a people whom God has wrought for this self-same purpose (to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven). A people who are always confident, knowing that whilst they are present in the body, they are absent from the Lord; and who would rather be absent from the body and present with the Lord. A people who walk by faith and not by sight. A people who labor, that whether present or absent, they may be accepted of him. And in the subsequent part of the same chapter, they are further described as a people for whom Christ died, and who were all dead with him, who are quickened together with Christ, and raised up together and made to sit together with him in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. To these, and only to these, are the words of our text applied, or applicable. None but the members of this kingdom have access to the judgment seat of Christ. They have come unto Mount Sion, to this heavenly Jerusalem, and to God, the Judge of all. All others stand before the mountain that might be touched, and that burned with fire, and blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the voice of words. But those who are redeemed to God, and from the dominion of the law, now stand in this peculiar relation to him, as subjects of his spiritual kingdom, and amenable to him as their Judge, and to them is secured the high and happy privilege of standing

before his judgment seat. They have full confidence in the righteousness of his judgments, and confide in all his decisions; and their desire and prayer is: "Search me, 0 God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (Psalm 139:23,24)." As Christ is their Lord, their King and their Judge, they must all of them stand before his judgment seat. Of all that is wrought in them, by God working in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, and of their working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, Christ is the only competent Judge. His foundation standeth sure, and hath this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. It is an invaluable birthright privilege of all the sons of God to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. There is no other judgment seat to which they can so confidently appeal. God has wrought all their works in them, and of his own works he alone can judge with unerring righteousness. All others are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. He will not accuse them unto the Father, for they have one that accuseth them, even Moses in whom they trust.

Three. When, and for what purpose must they all appear before the judgment seat of Christ? The impression has generally prevailed, as we have already remarked, that the judgment seat will not be assumed by Christ until after the resurrection of the dead, and that immediately after the resurrection all the human family, in one promiscuous mass, shall be assembled before the bar of God, when the exact state of every one shall be ascertained and determined, and the final destiny of each shall be announced by the eternal Judge. That God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he has appointed, and that that day or period shall be after the resurrection, we fully believe. But that judgment will not be a court of inquisition or investigation; for the dead shall all be judged according to the things which are already written in

the books, which shall then be opened. The Lord already knows them that are his; the saints have already been judged and acquitted, and freely justified through the redemption that is Christ Jesus. God has already pronounced on them, and promised to remember their sins and iniquities no more. They are blotted out as a thick cloud, and shall never again come in remembrance. Nor will any investigation of the condition of the ungodly be required; for they are condemned already and the wrath of God (even now) abides on them. The judgment of both saints and sinners is already decided, pronounced and recorded in the books, and the day of judgment which shall be at the resurrection is the day when all that is now written, of the destiny of saints and sinners, shall be fully executed. The day of the judgment of Sodom, Gomorrah, Tyre, Sidon, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem, were not days of investigation, for their sins were summed up, and the amount of their punishment determined and written hundreds of years before the execution of their judgments on them, and the times of execution were called the days of their judgment. Can it be supposed that God has less knowledge of the state of mankind now than he will have at any future time? Or that he will find occasion to revoke, modify, or in the smallest degree recede from what he has already pronounced on all the sons of Adam? Already he knows them that are his; he has not to wait to be informed. He has put his seal upon the heirs of immortality, and has given them his Spirit to witness with their spirit that they are the sons of God. Christ has pledged his word, that he will raise them all up at the last day, and that they shall live and reign with him in glory. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." They shall never come into condemnation, world without end.

Instead then of indulging fearful apprehensions of a future day of inquisition, and liability of being repelled from the

presence of our God and Savior, let us rejoice that the Judgment Seat of Christ is in his Holy Hill of Zion, in his church, and that he now presides, that he now sits in judgment, and now all his judgments are decisive and irrevocable. He now calls his own sheep by name, and none but his own, and leadeth them out from all wrath and condemnation. He now says unto them, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." If this view of the subject be accepted, what does the apostle mean by reminding the saints that "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ?"

We understand Paul to mean that the saints, to whom these words are exclusively addressed, being redeemed from that law which consigned them to wrath and damnation, are no more under it, and can never again be tried and condemned by it. We are dead to it, by the body of Christ. No more under it, but under Christ, who is himself the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. Now therefore being under law to Christ, we stand before his judgment seat, and not before the seat of Moses, or the law of sin and death. Being now under law to Christ, we are amenable to him, subject to his law, which he has written in our hearts and in our minds, and accountable to him for all that is done in our body, good or bad. The context describes the saints in the body. The new man which is born of God is now living in an earthly tabernacle, which is soon to be dissolved; this tabernacle he calls a body, a house, etc., which is so radically distinct and dissimilar from the new man, that to be present with, and at home in it, is to be absent from Christ; yet while in it we groan, and earnestly desire to be clothed upon with our heavenly house, or spiritual body, we are subject to trials, temptations, doubts, fears, distrust and disobedience. While in the body or earthly tabernacle, the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus makes us free from the law of

sin and death; so also another law which is in our members warring against the spirit, brings us into captivity to the law of sin which is in our members. Thus in our body things good and bad are constantly transpiring. In this state we stand before the church of God, which is the judgment seat of Christ, where every vain thought and idle word is judged and condemned. And there Christ by his Spirit sits in judgment to approve of all the works of the Spirit which are wrought in us. When the heaven-born child comes to relate to the church his experience of the quickening operation of the Spirit, he stands before the judgment seat, to give an account of what God has wrought in him, and to receive from the judgment seat a decision, according to what God has done for him, and when gathered into the church he is no more his own, being bought with a price. He is there subject to the laws of the Kingdom and the discipline of the House of God, from which judgment seat shall be awarded to him either approval or censure, according to the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad.

When, therefore, and so long as we stand in the church of God, we are before the judgment seat of Christ, and all our walk and conversation must be tested by the laws of Christ, and all the decisions from the judgment seat are bound on earth, and bound in heaven. The necessity of our standing before the judgment seat of Christ is because we are incompetent to judge for ourselves. The Lord is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our standing King, and his judgment seat is as indispensable to our good and his glory as his mercy seat. Remember, Christians, your holy calling, your birthright privilege, and submit to the authority of Christ in his church. None but Christians stand before the judgment seat of Christ, to be tried by the laws of his spiritual kingdom, and it is of God's abounding mercy and grace that we can appeal, in all our straits, to him who is not only our Judge, but also our Advocate. As in the words of the poet:

"Is there ambition in my heart?
Search, gracious God, and see;
And turn each cursed idol out
That dares to rival thee."

Middletown, N.Y
July 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 228 – 234

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God’s judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt has been found upon all the posterity of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul’s gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice,

Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." - Eph. i. 3, 4. The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5-7). By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." - Rom. viii. 1. This is as the waters of Noah unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the

iniquities of us all, (that is of all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3,4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regeneration, and shall never again come into condemnation for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third. The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasting covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, therefore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul’s gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this

seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to set together in heavenly places; and they are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine revelation

assures us that “The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us.” - Isaiah xxxiii. 22. As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

“Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin.”

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

Middletown, N.Y.
June 15, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 339 - 344

JUDSON'S LETTER.

WHILE with this Burman Missionary, we disapprove of and protest against the wicked extravagance and waste committed by a portion of the professed followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, we cannot with propriety withhold our hearty protest against his proposed plan of reform. He has, it is true, with sonic degree of talent, pointed out the existing evil of pride and vanity; although in this particular he has not gone far enough, for lie has left unnoticed much of the "spiritual wickedness of high places." We would rather begin at the fountain head of pride and vanity, and unmask the hydra monster, and bring to light the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. We would point out not only the males and females in general, but also the clergy, as they are denominated, who in common with their members bow obsequiously to the sceptre of this monster, who (as Mr. J. says) grins defiance to the prohibitions of apostles, &c.

For the satisfaction of some of our readers we will here insert the following extracts, embracing in our view, the most exceptionable part of Mr. J's letter.

"3. In the posture you have assumed, look up and behold the eye of your benignant Savior ever gazing upon you, with the tenderest love - upon you, his daughters, his spouse, wishing above all things, that you would yield your hearts entirely to him, and become holy, as he is holy, rejoicing when he sees one and another accepting his pressing invitation, and entering the more perfect way; for on that account he will be able to draw such precious souls into a nearer union with himself, and place them at last in the higher spheres, where they will receive and reflect more copious communication of

light, from the great fountain of light, the uncreated Sun. * * * * * *

4. Surely you can hold out no longer. Thanks be to God, I see you taking off your necklaces and earrings, tearing away your ribbons and ruffles and superfluities of head-dress, and I hear you exclaim, What shall we do next? An important question, deserving serious consideration. The ornaments you are renouncing, though useless, and worse than useless in their present state, can be so disposed of as to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, relieve the sick, enlighten the dark-minded, disseminate the holy scriptures, spread the glorious gospel throughout the world. Little do the inhabitants of a free christian country know of the want and distress endured by the greater part of the inhabitants of the earth. Still less idea can they form of the awful darkness, which rests upon the great mass of mankind, in regard to spiritual things. During the years that you have, been wearing these useless ornaments, how many poor creatures have been pining in want; how many have languished and groaned on beds of abject wretchedness; how many children have been bred up in the blackest ignorance, hardened in all manner of iniquitiy; how many immortal souls have gone down to hell, with a lie in their right hand, having never heard of the true God and the only Savior. Some of these miseries might have been mitigated; some poor wretch have felt his pain relieved; some widow’s heart have been made to sing for joy; some helpless orphans have been rescued from hardened depravity, and trained up for a happy life here and hereafter; some, yea many precious souls might have been redeemed from the quenchless fires of hell, where now they must lie and suffer to all eternity, had you not been afraid of being thought unfashionable, and not like other folks! had you not preferred adorning your persons and cherishing the most seductive feelings of vanity and pride! O, christian sisters, believers in God, in Christ, in an eternal hell! and can you

hesitate and ask what you shall do? Bedew these ornaments with the tears of contrition; consecrate them to the cause of charity; hang them on the cross of your dying Lord. Delay not an instant; hasten with all your might, if not to make reparations for the past, at least to prevent a continuance of the evil in the future. And be not content with individual exertion. Remember that union is strength. Take an example from the Temperance Societies, which are rising in their strength, and rescuing a nation from time brink of destruction. unite christian sisters of all denominations, and make an effort to rescue the church of God from the insidious attacks of an enemy, which is devouring her very vitals. As a counterpart to the societies just mentioned, may I respectfully suggest that plain-dress societies be. formed in every city and village throughout the land, recognizing two fundamental principles - the one based on 1 Tim. ii. 9: - All costly attire to be disused; the other on the law of general benevolence - the avails of such articles, and the saving resulted from time plain dress system, to be devoted to purposes of charity. Some general rules in regard to dress, and some general objects of charity may be easily ascertained and settled. Minor points must, of course, be left to the conscience of each individual, yet free discussion will throw light on many points at first obscure. Be not deterred by the suggestions, that in such discussions you are conversant about *small* things. Great things depend on small; and in that case, things which appear small to shortsighted man are great in the sight of God. Many there are who praise the principle of self-denial in general, and condemn it in all its particular applications, as too minute and scrupulous and severe. Satan is well aware that if he can secure the minute units, the sum total will be his own. Think not any thing small which may have a bearing upon the kingdom of Christ, and upon the destinies of eternity. How easy to conceive, from many known events, that the single fact of a lady’s divesting herself of a necklace for Christ’s sake, may involve

consequences which shall be felt in the remotest parts of the earth, and in all future generations to the end of time; yea, stretch away into boundless eternity, and be a subject of praise millions of ages after this world and all its ornaments are burnt up."

We consider the foregoing extracts fraught with the most glaring and blasphemous heresy perhaps ever published by any man professing to rely on the finished righteousness and atonement of Christ for salvation.

Can it be possible that Mr. Judson, with his bible before him, can think that the adorable Lamb, who is in the bible emphatically called "The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father," &c., that he, in whose hands is vested all power in heaven and on earth, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given him, is so very deficient in power after all as to be dependent on the American females for ability to draw souls into union with himself:, or that on their works, good or bad, his rejoicing depends? Be astonished, O heavens! and awfully afraid, O earth! when by the impudence of such men as Mr. Judson the Lord Jesus Christ is set forth robbed of his crown and stripped of his eternal power and Godhead, pressing his invitations, and urging his earnest solicitations upon creatures whose breath is in their nostrils.

But in his fourth item Mr. Judson's doctrine goes to supercede the work of Jesus Christ entirely, and he ascribes to his "golden calf" not only temporal blessings, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, &c., but also the spreading of the gospel and the salvation of souls.

Instead of saying, with an inspired apostle, "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid," namely, Jesus Christ, "grinning defiance" to the apostles' doctrine, he says that, "Some, yea many precious souls might have been redeemed

from the quenchless fires of hell, had you not been afraid of being thought unfashionable," &c.

But let us consider how Mr. J's redemption is to be made. First, Aaron like, he as an high priest, demands that the daughters of Israel shall strip themselves of their ornaments. Secondly, consecrate them to the cause of charity by bedewing them with the tears of contrition, &c. Thirdly, hang them in the Savior's stead upon the cross; i.e., offer them on the same altar on which the divine sacrifice was offered, and then join with him in the shout, "These be thy gods! O Israel," &c., and as gods sound their praise millions of ages after this world and all its vanities are consumed.

One object of Mr. Judson cannot well be disguised, namely, that of blending the church and world together in opposition to the express command of God, "Unite christian sisters of all *denominations."* Christ has established but one denomination of christians on earth; all other denominations are harlots, and he that is joined to an harlot is one flesh. Thus Mr. J. identified himself with all the daughters of the old mother of harlots, and having placed himself at the corner of the streets for the seduction of the simple, in the language 01 the harlot he says: "Cast in thy lot with us and we will have one purse."

"May I respectfully suggest (says Mr. Judson) that plain dress societies be formed in every city and village throughout the land." We answer yes, if you can bring a precept and example from the word of God. But this he does not attempt. He gives himself as authority, and says, Delay not an instant, and points to the temperance societies for an example. Such precepts and examples may do for those who teach for doctrines the commandments of men. But the followers of the Lamb will never join in such unhallowed connections with anti-christ. They will hear his voice and follow him, but a

stranger they will not follow. Many professors of religion, including perhaps nearly all nominal and worldly minded professors, may unite. Pilate and Herod may make friends; t he mother of harlots and all her daughters may join in unison. But thus saith the Lord: "Associate yourselves together and ye shall be broken in pieces." And to his children the Lord says: "Say not a confederacy to all to whom this people shall say a confederacy, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid."

We cannot suppress our astonishment that even Mr. Judson should imagine that his golden calf will be a subject of praise in the world to come, although we must confess that this theory is consistent with his faith in a plurality of Saviors; for if the single fact of a lady's divesting herself of a useless necklace has a bearing on the eternal destiny, and the united exertions of a plain dress society can save many souls from the quenchless fires of hell, where without these exertions they must lie and suffer to all eternity, it would be perfectly consistent to praise them for their God-like power to save. However beautiful this doctrine may sound in the ears of the gay and fashionable religionists of this day, there is no comeliness in it to those who believe that Jesus is God., and besides him there is no Savior. Such souls as know the Lord, confidently hope, through the blood of their incarnate Lord, to be permitted to join in the song of his redeemed, and. in eternal anthems of everlasting worship swell these heavenly notes: "Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name be the glory. Forasmuch as we know that we are not redeemed with such corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot; who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, for you, who by him do believe in God," &c.

"Let others trust what names they please,
Their saints and angels boast;
We've no such advocates as these,
Nor trust t' the heavenly host."

We leave the subject. Our soul sickens within us, to think that such awful delusions should be sent from America to Burmah, and from thence reverberated back, through the correspondence of those professed "Teachers in Israel, who know not these things." The apostle Paul says, "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

"The Editor of a paper printed at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., expects to find opposition from other Editors.

We think and hope he will be disappointed. At any rate, his statements must have more truth and common honesty in them before any one will take notice of them." - *Baptist Repository.*

BE patient, Mr. Crosby, you shall have more truth. The Editor of a paper printed at New Vernon, Orange Co., N. Y., intends to furnish considerable more truth on various subjects; perhaps full as much as the Editor of the "Repository" would like to see in print, as he may probably have as much reason to dread its force as any other man. It is quite possible that the *Repository* may yet be compelled either to fight or ground the weapons of his rebellion at the feet of *more truth.* if the *Repository* is a fair specimen of "common honesty," we would prefer a kind of honesty that is not so common. We prefer singularity in preference to that kind of common honesty which it has so forcibly illustrated in the following article:

JUDSON'S LETTER – JEWELRY, &C.

"Since this letter to females on useless ornaments was published, we have had our eye on the results, and though we have kept no account, yet we are within bounds in saying that hundreds of articles of jewelry and extravagance have been sent into the treasury of the Lord. By the minutes of the Charleston, S. C., Association, it appears that on reading Dr. Judson's letter in a public meeting at Columbia, fifty-three articles of jewelry were sacrificed on the spot. This is the kind of nullification we like - pride and extravagance keep the treasury of benevolence poor."

Lest we should mistake the Editor's views of "common honesty," we will just analyze this popular article. And first, we are not to consider it as a random shot, or the production of a momentary excitement of his mind. It is a subject which lie has had in contemplation ever since Judson's letter was published. We may therefore venture to conclude that it is a fair sample of the editor's honesty and truth. He says, "Although we have kept no account, yet we are within bounds in saying that hundreds of articles of jewelry and extravagance have been sent in to the treasury of the Lord," *i. e.,* as the result of the publication of Judson's letter. Now allowing this to be the truth, the Lord's treasury is of course the receptacle of jewelry, extravagance, &c., and by means of Judson's letter the Lord is getting rich, and Lebanon is sufficient for an offering, and the cattle thereof for a burnt offering; and we may come before him with much less than the cattle of a thousand hills, or ten thousand rivers of oil. Nay, we may approach him with useless ornaments of pride and vanity, and contribute to the funds of the Lord, necklaces, beads, &c. But on the whole we are rather inclined to doubt the truth of the statement altogether. We cannot believe that these jewels and extravagances have any of them reached the Lord's treasury! But there are many

Achans in the camp at this day who covet the Babylonish garment and the golden wedge, and are willing to pretend that it is all consecrated to the use of the Lord which is put into their hands. This kind of honesty has become quite common among the money-bottomed professors of our age, and even the editor of the *Repository* would have us believe that fifty-three articles of jewelry put into the hands of these "greedy dogs which can never have enough," are a sacrifice holy and acceptable unto that God who has said: "But go ye and learn what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice" and that "Obedience is better than sacrifice and to harken than the fat of rams."

Common honesty, then, is that which would scour creation to obtain money in the Lord's name, without his liberty; it is that which would make mankind believe that the popular priesthood is the Lord's treasury, and what is given into their hands is given to the Lord; it would make them believe that the omnipotent God was unable to fulfill his purpose of salvation, and that thousands are sinking into the everlasting fire of hell for want of funds in the treasury of the Lord to save them. But how different was the honesty of the apostles. "Thy money perish with thee," said the apostle Peter to Simon Magos, "for thou hast thought that the gifts of the Holy Ghost might be bought with Monoy." Apostolic honesty is not common in our day; it is very rare, yet odd as it may appear we give it our decided preference. More anon.

New Vernon, N. Y.
January 16, 1833.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 20 – 28

JUDSON'S LETTERS

(From the Baptist Register.)

"BROTHER JUDSON notices in the following note to brother Allen the sentence in his letter on retrenchment, which gave rise to many injudicious strictures, and in a manner that we hope will put to silence those who have too readily impugned him:

EXTRACTS FROM CORRESPONDENCE.

MAULMEIN, July 28, 1833.

'DEAR BROTHER ALLEN: - I have received yours of June 15, 1833, and the valuable donation of tracts, almost all of which I have disposed of to excellent advantage. If you should please to remember us again, permit me to say that there is a great call for 'Pengilly,' 'Wisdom's Voice,' and other Temperance tracts, the letter on female dress, and the memoir of Mee Shway-ee.

Please to tell your friend who objects to the "heterodox" sentiment contained in the sentence: "Some, yea many, precious souls might have been redeemed from the quenchless fire of hell," &c., that he must take it in a popular, not strictly theological sense, and not make a man an offender for a word. Pray remember that I was writing a letter to the ladies, and not a supplement to 'Calvin's Institutes.'

I rejoice to hear of your increasing prosperity, but have only time to say so, and remain

Your affectionate brother,
A. JUDSON.

Rev. Ira M. Allen.’”

REMARKS.

WHEN we exposed the fallacy and, as we conceive, *blasphemy* of Mr. Judson’s Letter to the American Laides, it was not our design to make a man an offender for a word, nor to impugn him unjustly. But a solemn sense of duty to God and to our brethren, drew from us an honest expression of the abhorrence in which we hold his doctrines; not because we thought them unpopular, but because they were radically and theologically wrong, hostile to the word of God, and calculated to supercede and treat with contempt the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, by attributing to his new plan more efficiency and worth than to the blood of Christ. We could not view this as a single-handed stroke, causually given by a slip of Mr. Judson’s unruly pen, but we viewed it as the language of the idolized oracle for the East Indies, and coming to us endorsed by the missionary fraternity of the United States, and eulogized by nearly all the editors of religious periodicals in our country. The particular passage in Mr. J.’s letter, for which the above note is intended to serve either as an apology or a justification, is expressed in the following words:

“Some, yea many, precious souls might have been redeemed from the quenchless fires of hell, where now they must lie and suffer to all eternity, had you not been afraid of being thought unfashionable, and not like other folks.”

Mr. J.’s new plan of redemption is that the ladies strip off their ornamental and costly apparel, and hang these upon the cross; and thus fully substitute them in the place of him “who came from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah,” and who, when hanging on the cross, cried, “It is finished!” and gave up the ghost.

By reference to the fourth number of our first volume, a more copious view of Mr. Judson's doctrine and our objections. to it will be found.

For the present we will examine and see how far the above extract from his letter to Mr. Allen will obviate our objections.

And first, he acknowledges the sentiment to be *heterodox.* Now this acknowledgment would do if accompanied with suitable penitence and reformation; but this we do not discover, for he immediately attempts to palliate his wickedness· by the most flimsy and trifling excuses imaginable, and by throwing censure on those 'who have objected to his *blasphemy,* by representing them so very censorious as to attempt to make him an offender for a word, which if true, would be contrary to the divine rule.

Second. He says "that it must be taken in a *popular,* not strictly *theological* sense." By this expression, if we understand him, he appeals from the word of God, which is the standard of truth, to the standard of popularity. This appeal may indeed answer his purpose, for his abominable doctrines have never been objected to as being unpopular, but as being untrue and blasphemous; so that this appeal, so far from extenuating his guilt, only goes to show that he has divers weights in his *bag - a* great and a small. But the scriptures assure us that these things are abomination in the sight of the Lord.

But last, he would excuse himself because he was not writing a supplement to "Calvin's Institutes." But does it then follow that he has a right to utter falsehood in the name of the Lord, and professing to be a messenger of the Lord merely because he is not writing a supplement to another man's writings? Who can bid him God's speed I Can you, reader? We cannot - we dare not.

If we could persuade ourself that these errors were at the first a slip of the pen, certainly his apology shows that upon mature deliberation he chooses to justify himself; and. still contend for them in a popular sense, notwithstanding his tacit acknowledgment that they are theologically heterodox and wrong. What latitude Mr. Judson is entitled to when writing to the ladies, we shall leave others to judge; for our own part, we have ever believed that it was as necessary to preach and to write the truth when addressing the ladies as when addressing any other part of the human family.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
July 2, 1834

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorial Volume 1
Pages 138 - 141

JUDSON'S LETTER.

Agreeably to an intimation given in our last, we are now about to embellish our columns with a copious extract from the *Cross and Baptist Journal,* of Cincinnati, Ohio; and as 'the editor of that paper specially requests that we should copy his notes entire, or say nothing about them, we feel willing to gratify him by making as fair a display of his *learning, piety*, truth and modesty, as the materials which he has favored us with will admit of. We will here insert his notes, *[without the use of brackets]* and then endeavor to avail ourselves of the liberty which he has so generously given us, of commenting on them as we please.

(From the Cross and Baptist Journal.)
"MR. JUDSON GUILTY OF BLASPHEMY.

Startle not, reader, this is not our assertion; yet it has been asserted; and by whom and for what you shall see.

It will be borne in mind that at the close of the year 1831, Mr. Judson, Missionary in Burmah, addressed a letter 'To the female members of christian churches in the United states of America,' on the subject of dress. The circumstances that gave rise to it were stated in the letter itself; and it contained a pungent appeal against the use of expensive and fashionable ornaments, contrary to apostolic precept.

The letter was extensively published in this country, in May 1832, and the general spirit and sentiments of it almost universally commended. A single clause, forming part of a sentence, was exceptionable, and by some was strongly objected to; among others, we have been told, by Mr. Cone, of New York. Brother Ira N. Allen, agent of the Baptist General Tract Society, in writing to Mr. Judson shortly after, took occasion to refer to the exceptional clause of his letter,

and to the objections made against it. Mr Judson's reply was published in the *Baptist Tract Magazine,* and copied, with a prefatory remark, by the *Baptist Register.* The *Signs of the Times*copies from the *Register,* and appends remarks. We now copy the whole from the *Signs of the Times;* and we request the reader to notice the *candor, kindness* and *accuracy* which are displayed in the remarks made by the editor of the *Signs of the Times.* In copying the remarks we shall insert some words in brackets, to correct the misspelling of the learned editor of the *Signs of the Times.*" - See "*Signs of the Times,*" - No. 14, page 222. * * *

REMARKS ON MR. STEVENS' NOTES.

This learned editor seems to be greatly shocked at the mention of the word *blasphemy,* in regard to the sentiments animadverted upon in our former remarks on Judson's letter to the females of America, while he admits with us that the sentiment alluded to is objectionable, and so much so that he purposely and for that reason suppressed it in the copy which he published in his paper; and so much so as to a]arm Mr. Allen (of Philadelphia, the General Agent of the B. G. Tract Society) to that degree as to cause him to write to Mr. Judson on the subject. If through our *ignorance,* or incapacity to understand the language of the *great and wise* we have over-rated the amount of wickedness contained in the sentiment alluded to, we can assure Mr. Stevens it will, when we are convinced that such is the fact, give us more pleasure to retract and confess, than it did at first to publish our remarks. His preconceived opinion of our feelings to the contrary notwithstanding.

On what grounds Mr. Allen and Mr. Stevens objected to the sentiment in question, he has not informed us. Our reasons for rejecting the sentiment we frankly give, viz; It was in our opinion blasphemous. First, inasmuch as it made God a liar,

(see 1 John v. 10) by rejecting his testimony. Second, because it was, in our opinion, an attempt to supercede the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the substitution of the efforts of American female, and consequently to abase Christ and his atonement, and to exalt them with their works, by ascribing to them and their sacrifices an efficience which, according to his doctrine, the atonement of Christ had failed to exert. And lastly, because it was calculated to *lead captive silly women, for filthy lucre's sake,* by swelling their pride to believe that the destiny of *many precious souls* was so far at their disposal that they might be saved or damned, according as they should be disposed to give or withhold their ornaments, &c.

Now as this doctrine denies the positive declaration of God, it of course reflects on his veracity, and unavoidably comes under the denomination of what the bible calls blasphemy, as we read and understand the scriptures. If Mr. Stevens can make it weigh any less, we will hear him, and request him to inform us what objection he had to the sentiment, if it was not the same which we have expressed; he ought not to reject Mr. Judson's doctrine without a cause.

The reader will observe that after the quotation of each note, our remarks will follow.

"NOTES BY THE EDITOR OF THE 'CROSS AND JOURNAL.'"

(a) Perhaps we ought to inform our readers that the 'signs of' the Times' is a semimonthly paper, published in the State of New York, (an eastern production - we are sorry that New York produces such things) and professes to be 'devoted exclusively to the Baptist cause;' and moreover is of the opinion, we believe, that its own precious self is the only advocate of genuine bible truth in the world, believing, as it would appear, that not one of all the religious publications in

the country contain, as brother Thompson said of the *Baptist Weekly Journal,* a single word of gospel. Elder Stephen Gard, of Butler Co., Ohio, is agent for the 'Signs.'"

(a) We feel ourselves obliged to Mr. Stevens for his kindness in informing his patrons that ours is a semi-monthly paper, and published in the State of New York, anti of his regret, &c.; for this is saying more in our favor, perhaps, than he intended - and of our agent for Butler Co., Ohio. In his next, it will be highly gratifying to us if he will give his readers our post-office address, our terms, &c.; and if it would not be asking too much, we would thank him to give a full list of the names of our agents in the great Valley of Mississippi, and especially all the ministers and brethren who have discontinued his paper and added their names to our subscription list, in the bounds of his own state. (Ohio.) We are sensible of the imperfection of our paper, yet we mean to contend for nothing but pure bible truth, and Mr. Stevens will confer a very great favor if he will point us to another paper which contends for the same purity of faith and practice.

"(*b*) Please do notice, reader, these expressions, which are found in the remarks of the 'Signs:' 'The *blasphemy*of Mr. Judson's letter.' 'The *abhorrence* in which he holds his doctrines.' 'His *guilt,'* &c. Who, deriving his only knowledge of Mr. Judson's character from the remarks of the 'Signs,' would not look upon him as a monster of iniquity? for what can be a greater crime in the sight of God than blasphemy? Is Elder Beebe utterly ignorant of language? or does his hatred against missions make him a maniac?"

(b) We are not only willing, but desirous, that the friends of truth should take particular notice of our remarks, and of the expressions to which Mr. S. objects. If the sentiments embraced in Mr. Judson's letter are indeed blasphemous, (and we believe they are) we have a right to hold them in

abhorrence, and to call them abominable; and inasmuch as Mr. J. would rather publicly palliate than confess, we can only look upon his course as wicked, and of course attaching guilt to him. We make no boast of our knowledge of language; yet we are not *utterly ignorant* of language. We were able to discover some expressions in Judson's letter which do not accord with the language of the bible, or with christian experience. And in answer to the other interrogatory, whether *Elder Beebe's hatred of missions makes him a maniac,* we adopt the language of the great and learned apostle to the Gentiles: "I am not mad, most noble Festus, (alias Stevens) but speak the words of truth and soberness."

"(*c*) The statement that the language of Mr. Judson, containing what the editor of the 'Signs' calls 'blasphemy,' 'abominable doctrine,' and so on, was 'eulogized by nearly all the editors of religious periodicals in our country,' is as far from being true as any thing could be written. In our reprint of Mr. Judson's letter, in May 1832, the exceptional clause was omitted, and the omission indicated in the usual way. We omitted it because we deemed it a loose and careless expression, and highly objectionable. We doubt whether the editor of the 'Signs' can find a single religious editor in the United States who has undertaken even to *justify* the language of Mr. J., now in question; and we challenge him to find one, even one, who eulogized it. The general spirit and drift of the letter was commended, highly commended,. and justly so; but not the clause in which Elder Beebe finds blasphemy."

(c) Here Mr. Stevens would represent us as being guilty of falsehood in saying, We could not view this as a single handed stroke, casually given by a slip of Mr. Judson's unruly pen; but we viewed it as the language of the idolized oracle of the East Indies, and coming to us endorsed by the missionary fraternity of the United States, and eulogized by

nearly all the editors of religious periodicals in the United States. Our readers will notice that we stated this as our *views;* if we were wrong, why could not our *learned* opponent correct our mistake, by supplying another pair of brackets, instead of attempting to judge the secrets of our heart, and to toll the public that such was not our views, by his assertion that this expression of our views is as far from being true as any thing that could be written? But we shall venture to repeat the assertion, that such were, and are, our views; and we call upon our accuser to prove that they were not.

[We did not, however, intend to be understood that that abstract sentence was singled out and eulogized, but that; Judson's letter which contained it was eulogized by all the religious periodicals of our country, which had come within our notice, not excepting that of Mr. Stevens.' The letter (not merely its general drift) was commended, highly commended, without excepting the clause in which Elder Beebe finds blasphemy.]

If we had preserved our file of exchange papers, we could readily make such extracts as would probably bring a blush even from Mr. Stevens; and if he insists upon it, they shall yet be looked up, and published for his special benefit. But in the mean time we will from recollection state some of the unqualified eulogies expressed by the editor of the *Baptist Repository.* (Mr. Crosby) After speaking in the highest terms of approbation and applause, he recommended. it as being worthy to be taken into every pulpit, and read at the close of divine worship; and he recommended that all who had not, should read it; observing at the same time, for his own part, he had a great relish for re-perusal. This one instance will perhaps be sufficient to meet Mr. Stevens' challenge; and if he wants any more, or if he insists on the language of the *Repository,* verbatim, it shall hereafter be furnished. It

was also recommended through the *Repository,* to have the letter (as it was) incorporated with the tract called 'A cry (or call) from Burmah;' and it is actually now going the rounds, in the form of a tract; and the very principle of this letter is now being acted upon, the objectionable sentence not excepted, as we will show by the following extract from a late number of the *Repository.*

In the *Baptist Register,* copied into the *Repository,* the writer of the following extract has the presumption to assume one of the consecrated appellations of the Deity, 'Alpha,' and after speaking in approbation of Mr. Judson's letter, breathes out the same sentiment in the following language, viz:

(From the Baptist Repository.)

"A certain minister requested a christian tailor to make him such a coat as would be judicious if he knew ten other ministers would have similar ones, and that the example of each would be followed by twenty brethren, and every cent so saved put into the treasury of the Lord. The result was, the tailor's bill differed from his ordinary one in quantity of cloth, one-eighth; in work, one-fourth; and in trimmings, one-third. This coat has been imitated by several ministers and brethren, and in consequence, contributions for the cause of God are increasing. And is it too much to expect that some ransomed heathen will be raised to heaven, who, but for this self-denial' would have sunk to hell? Well may this hope in a christian's breast diminish the mortification occasioned by such singularity."

"(*d*) FULLY *substitute* them - Shameless and stupidly perverse accusation! He accuses Mr. Judson of setting aside entirely, the atoning blood of Christ, and 'FULLY *substituting*' as a sacrifice in its place, the costly apparel of the ladies!! Let Elder Beebe utter but a moiety of this falsehood against any

of his fellow citizens in relation to their mercantile transactions, and we might expect the penitentiary would catch him very quick."

(*d*) Why so angry, Mr. Stevens? We will not resent the imputation of shamelessly, stupid, perverse, &c.; not even that of falsehood; but we would decline if possible the proposed honor of a penitentiary! We can assure Mr. Stevens, that as bitter as he may think us against the mission cause, we would much rather pray the God of heaven, if consistent with his holy purpose, to make Mr. Stevens and Mr. Judson, and all others who are as we conceive at war with the truth, the subjects of his saving grace, than to betray such feeling as he has expressed towards us in his note; but we forgive, and pray God to "lay not this sin to his charge," as we presume that in the heat of his feelings his zeal has run away with his better judgment; and at the same time we bless God that it is not yet in the power of our enemies to thrust us into prison for believing and publishing what we conceive to be the truth.

Before we pass this note, let us carefully and prayerfully examine, and see whether our expression was or was not reprehensible. The question is, Does Mr. Judson's language imply any thing like substituting the sacrifices which he recommends, in the place of the atonement of Jesus Christ, and does he ascribe a saving power to the former, and inefficiency to the latter? Hear him.

"Some, yea many precious souls might have been redeemed from the quenchless fires of hell, where now they must lie and suffer to all eternity, had you not been afraid of being thought unfashionable, and not like other folks - had you not preferred adorning your person, and cherishing the most seductive feelings of vanity and pride. O christian sisters! believers in Christ, in an eternal hell! and can you hesitate,

and ask what you shall do? Bedew these ornaments with the tears of contrition; consecrate them to the cause of christianity; *hang them on the cross of your dying Lord!* Delay not an instant, hasten with all your might; if not to make reparations for the past," (that is, by bringing precious souls up again from the quenchless fires of hell, as there can be no other way of making preparations for the past, as the many precious souls in hell have got there through the neglect, &c., of the ladies of this address) "at least to prevent a continuance of the evil" (that is, of any more precious souls going to hell is a similar way) "in future,
* * * *

'How easy to conceive, from many known events, that the single fact of a lady's divesting herself of a necklace for Christ's sake, may involve consequences which shall be felt in the remotest parts of the earth, and in all future generations, to the end of time; yea, stretch away in the boundless eternity, and be a subject of praise, millions of ages after this world and all its ornaments are burned up."

The above extract from Mr. Judson's letter shows the ground on which our conclusions were founded, viz: Mr. J. admits that our beloved Lord has died on the cross. Yet his death has failed, utterly failed, to secure the salvation from an eternal hell, many precious souls who, notwithstanding the death of Christ, are now suffering the quenchless fires of hell, in consequence of the wickedness of the ladies who dwell on the earth. And now as Christ has died, and either because these many were not embraced in his atonement, or because there was not sufficient efficacy in his blood to save them, they are in hell, Mr. J. proposes that another sacrifice shall be forthwith made, without one moment's delay, by the females; and that the said offering, or sacrifice, shall consist of useless and extravagant apparel, &c., and that the same be consecrated by tears, and then offered upon the same cross

on which the inefficient offering was made. If this does not amount to a full substitution, we call upon Mr. Stevens to tell us what item is lacking to make it complete. Will he say we have quoted him unfairly? Let the reader compare our copy with the original letter. Does he say our inferences are not warranted by the language of Mr. Judson? Let the candid judge. Does he say this does not amount to *blasphemy?* Let him tell us then what will.

"(*e*) Again, if there is any meaning in Elder Beebe's words, he charges Mr. Judson with making popular opinion, instead of the word of God, his standard of truth; a charge which it would seem needless to say, cannot be sustained by a shadow of plausibility."

(e) The words which Mr. S. seems to find fault with in this note, were Mr. Judson's. He says to Mr. Allen, Tell your friends,' &c., 'that he must take it (the exceptional parts of his letter) in a popular, not strictly theological sense.' So if Mr. S. cannot find the shadow which he is pursuing, he must not blame us, but his favorite, Judson.

"(*f*) A closing remark or two upon Elder Beebe and his 'Signs of the Times.' And first, all the pieces in the 'Signs of the Times' are not so bad as the one we have above quoted. Many important truths and just sentiments have appeared in its columns. Even 'the father of lies' himself tells many truths. But,

Second: We do not remember ever to have seen any notice in the 'Signs of the Times,' of the progress of the gospel in Burmah - of the fact that the scriptures are translated into the language of that empire, and already circulated to a considerable extent - that many of the Burmahs, in the face of opposition and death, have professed belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. and have been baptized - that truth is

manifestly making its way to a multitude of minds, and that the light of divine truth seems ready to spring up all over the empire. These facts seem to excite no joy in the breast of Elder Beebe. He keeps the silence of death respecting them. But when the beloved Judson, in the warmth of his heart and the earnestness of his appeals, utters a sentence, objectionable indeed, and which he himself does not justify, see the vulture-like eagerness with which the obnoxious phrase is siezed upon, and the apparent delight which is felt in holding up its author as a blasphemer. Verily, it is perfectly unaccountable to us how any man, with any pretensions to intelligence, candor or piety, can approve such a publication.. Yet such there are.

Third: Elder Beebe, as well as some others, would have us believe that he is well informed on the subject of missionary operations; and that his very knowledge on the subject is the ground of his opposition. It may be that he has read and informed himself about these things, and yet is opposed. Such a thing is possible. But spread information, and approbation as surely follows as the genial warmth of the sun causes the vegetation to spring up from the rich soil. True, there may be exceptions. As in the one case, the worm, the frost, or the hail-storm, may nip in the bud or destroy. So. in the other, some mental or moral obliquity may entirely darken the soul, even in the full blaze of light. A well informed christian may be an opposer of missions; but how he can be, is quite as difficult for us to conceive, as it is to conceive how a well instructed and well informed disciple of Christ in the United States can be a Roman Catholic.

Fourth: There is one point of view in which the conduct of Elder Beebe, and the men of his stamp, seems strangely inconsistent. Tell them of the increase and prevalence of infidelity, intemperance, licentiousness, Roman Catholicism, of the various forms of vice, and of the flagrant corruptions

of christianity, and of the danger which thus impends over the interests of truth, and our civil freedom and safety, tell them of all this, and these men are wonderfully calm and undisturbed. They will say to you, forsooth, that there is no danger, that the Lord reigns, that he will take care of his own cause, that he will preserve his chosen people, and that there. is no cause for fear; and with this they remain perfectly quiet. But go to these men again, and tell them of the Missionary and Temperance Societies, of the efforts of good men to spread the gospel, and to check the tide of vice in its various channels, and behold them starting up again - 'gorgons and chimeras dire' haunt their imaginations - the goblins of church and state, money-loving, money-making priests, speculation, truth ruined, and our government prostrated, stare them in the face. They must awake to action, - a semi-monthly tract, the 'Signs of the Times,' with all its lying wonders, must be sent through the land - they must blacken the character of the missionaries, they must have their Black Rock Convention, they must take hold like real working men, and that in right earnest - indeed it would seem as if Elder Beebe and his coadjutors now imagined themselves especially commissioned of heaven to sustain the throne of Omnipotence, lest being undermined by missionary, temperence and Sunday School men, it should totter and fall!"

"If Elder Beebe should see fit to copy in full into his 'Signs of the Times,' our 'notes' on his 'remarks,' as above given, he is perfectly welcome to do so; he may then comment on them as he pleases; otherwise it is our special request that he would say nothing in any shape about them."

(f) While we carefully acknowledge the compliment, (as far as it goes) that all our pieces are not as bad as the one which he has quoted, we cannot refrain from some fearful misgivings on the subject, lest we might in some unguarded

moment have left some article so loose as to suit the views of this learned and popular editor. His comparing the editor of this paper to the father of lies, is one step lower than we feel disposed at this time to follow him.

Second. - We have never devoted our paper to the promulgation of the reports of missionary hirelings, either in Burmah or elsewhere, any otherwise than in endeavoring in some instances, by making extracts from them, to undeceive those who have been hoodwinked by their high sounding pretensions. It would indeed give us pleasure to know that a just and accurate translation of the scriptures into all the various languages of the earth, was in progress, although we have no idea that even so desirable a thing would, or could possibly, result in the salvation of one solitary individual of the human family, more than what God has from everlasting ordained to salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Mr. S. has never found the least mention in our paper of the progress of the gospel in Burmah. Astonishing! He says we keep the silence of death respecting them, viz: those who are in that place professing belief in the Lord Jesus Christ; and of the light of divine truth springing up. all over the empire, &c. These facts seems (to Mr. S.) to inspire no joy in our breast. We have yet to learn that the gospel of Jesus Christ is published in Burmah, or that truth is springing up in that empire. True, we have been informed of the progress made by Mr. Judson and others, in the promulgation of their doctrine, but we remain unconvinced that Mr. Judson or his colleagues are engaged in propagating any better doctrine in Burmah than that which is embraced in their letters to this country. This is the cause of our death-like silence on the subject.

Throughout his notes, Mr. S. represents that we have seized, in a vulture-like manner, an exceptional sentence, which in a

warmth of feelings was unconsciouly uttered, and overlooking all the rest, had made use of this abstract expression, for the purpose of holding up its author as a blasphemer; but this representation is incorrect in many respects. By reference to our strictures on his letter published in our first volume, number four, it will be seen that there were other exceptionable sentences in his letter, and that there were some few things stated in the letter in which we were agreed with the author, and that we distinctly stated that our extracts embraced *the most exceptionable* parts of Mr. J.'s letter.

We will not now attempt to solve the unaccountable mystery to Mr. Stevens, how any man, with any pretension to intelligence, candor or piety, can approve such a publication as the 'Signs of the Times.' We will only assure him that, in our opinion, his inability to comprehend this mystery is no greater than was that of a certain learned master of Israel, concerning 'how a man could be born when he was old.' But,

Third. - Elder Beebe, as well as some others, would have you believe, that we make no pretensions to any extensive knowledge concerning your missionary operations, except what statements have appeared from time to time in the journals devoted to the interests of that cause. On what Mr. Stevens' round assertion is founded, we leave the candid to judge, as we have never published any such pretentions. It may be proper here, for his edification, to state what we do, and what we do not know about the missionary questions of the day.

We know that they claim to be of God, and an instituted means of salvation. They claim to have carried the gospel into many places where it would never have gone, but for the modern efforts which they have exerted. We know that in the missionary operations of the day, numerous societies are

organized, whose memberships, directorships, and other articles of merchandize, are bought and sold; and we know that they bestow their honorary degrees and titles, according to the amount of money which is paid for them; and that they assume the right to dictate to those whom they call the ministers of the gospel, when, where and how, they shall preach, and what they shall receive for their services; and we have become pretty well convinced that their agents have gone abroad over the face of our country, like the frogs of Egypt, and come up into our houses, and into our kneeding troughs and ovens; and that by reason of them, the ancient order of Zion has been wickedly perverted, union and harmony in many churches not only marred, but utterly destroyed; while their missionaries, and other agents, are carrying on a complete system of mendicancy, which is bordering on a state of hierarchy, and consequently must result, eventually, in the utter prostration of our civil and religious liberties. And we know, or should judge by the specimen of their feelings expressed by their exasperated champion, (Mr. Stevens) that if all the power were theirs, the poor 'Signs of the Times' would cease to tell tales, and the editor, much against his inclination, would take up his lodging in the penitentiory.

But we do not know, who has required these things at their hands; nor of a single passage of scripture to justify their pretensions; nor of any good that has ever resulted from them; nor anything but deception, ambition and interest to sustain them; and last of all, we do not know but we may be wrong, in at least some of our views, notwithstanding our ardent desire to be right.

Mr. S. is certainly wrong in supposing that an increase of information would secure the approbation of those who fear the Lord and tremble at his word. It is well known, that the more such persons learn of the artful management of these

humanly contrived religious money-getting machines, the greater is their opposition to and abhorrence of them.

Fourth. - We, and those of our *stamp,* are accused of inconsistency, because we are not so much alarmed at the prevalence of other vice and immorality, or even of that of Roman Catholicism, as we are at the astonishing strides which are taken in advancing what is falsely called the cause of benevolence. If this be inconsistent, we are content to be called so; for truly we do not fear so much, all the combined forces of earth and hell in open combat, as we do the unhallowed influence of those who creep into the churches, and with them bring in damnable heresy. These we dread; not because we fear they will undermine the throne of Omnipotence, or go one step beyond that firm decree which has said unto them, 'Fill up the measure of your fathers, ye serpents, ye generation of vipers; how can ye escape the damnation of hell?' But our fears are grounded upon those fearful predictions recorded in the bible, by which we are taught to look for the most sanguinary and pitiless persecution from this very quarter. It is from those who have pilfered the Baptist name, we even now experience the greatest opposition we are called to encounter. The openly profane have never, from the days of Cain unto the present, been so great a scourge to the saints of God, as those who have stood the highest in religious profession.

And we would farther hint to our very sage friend, we feel ourselves specially called on to 'Blow the trumpet in Zion, and to sound an alarm in God's holy mountain.' We are by no means surprised at the spirit in which Mr. S. refers to 6ur paper, and to the Black Rock Meeting, and to our opposition to their new order of things; we know there are such spirits in the world, and yet we rejoice not that thy are made subject to us through Christ our Lord; but rather because our names are, as we hope and trust, written in heaven.

And now a few words to Mr. Stevens. We simply wish to whisper, that we were not brought up exactly at the feet of Gamaliel, nor at any academical institution, where grave doctors and divines are manufactured: but then we have been favored with sufficient information to enable us to read the bible. On bible grounds, therefore, we are altogether prepared to meet you. Now lest you should be under the false impression that we are what you called us, 'The *learned* editor of the 'Signs of the Times,' we do you to wit: we make no such pretension; and that you may be better informed of the regulations of the kingdom in which we hold our standing, we refer you to 1 Cor. i. 18, to the end of the chapter.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
September 10, 1834.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 144 – 159

1 KINGS VI. 12.

Elder Beebe - Dear Sir: If you will give your views, through the SIGNS, on 1 Kings vi. 12, you will much oblige me. Does it not convey the idea that there are conditions on the part of Solomon, which lies entirely to his choice, on his part, whether or not he will accept the warning given, in order to obtain the promise given in the thirteenth verse? And does it not also convey the idea that it is left entirely optional with Solomon, whether or not he will receive the counsel? This, with other similar passages, it appears difficult for me to reconcile with absolute predestination, since there are numerous passages in the Scripture wherein the command, precept or exhortation is given as if it were in the power of the creature to obey or not to obey. I only ask for information, and would be glad of perusing an editorial from you on this subject.

Yours truly,
J. GROOM.
Muffin, Tennessee, April 14, 1860.

Reply: 1 Kings vi. 12, "Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments and keep all my commandments, to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David, thy father."

The first interrogative presented by our correspondent, on this text, is, "Does it not convey the idea that there are conditions on the part of Solomon which lie entirely to his choice, on his part, whether or not he will accept the warning given in order to obtain the promise given in the thirteenth verse?" To this inquiry we answer, it does not convey any such idea to our mind, and we should be greatly shocked if it did. What could be our views of the eternal perfections of

Jehovah, especially of his truth, and of his immortality, were we compelled to believe that Solomon, as a man, a finite being, had power to decide whether God should or should not perform the things which he had promised David that he would perform? Or that God's promise to dwell among the children of Israel and not forsake them, depended for its accomplishment on the volition, not of his own will, but on that of a poor, finite, fickle man. In this case a promise was made and sworn to by the immutable God, and David relying on the certainty of its accomplishment had died in faith, but now, according to the horrid suggestion, we are to understand him to waive his own truth and holiness, and submit the whole matter to the decision of Solomon. What confidence could we repose in any of the promises of God, if we were compelled to believe that God could or would change the thing that had gone out of his mouth?

"Let frightened rivers change their course,
And backward hasten to their source;
Swift through the air let rocks be hurl'd,
And mountains like the chaff be twirl'd,
Let suns and stars forget to rise,
Or quit their stations in the skies,
Let heaven and earth both pass away,
Eternal truth shall ne'er decay,
A God, all truth, can never lie."

That God had predestinated the building of the temple in Jerusalem, and that he had made known his purpose to David, before Solomon had any knowledge of the matter, and perhaps before he was born, establishes the doctrine of predestination which these queries seem to be calculated to assail and to controvert. Instead of Solomon having power to sway the action of God, he, with all other finite beings, was himself subject to the power and providence of God. This Solomon understood when he wrote the proverb, "The King's

heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water he turneth it whithersoever he will." - Prov. xxi. 1. To any one who knows the Lord, this declaration of the wise man will commend itself; but what would be the result if this text could be transposed and made to read, The heart, or will of God, is in the hand of man, to be turned whithersoever man willeth? Could such a perversion of the truth of God add to the security of the children of Israel, or to any other of the creatures of God? Jehovah has himself settled this last question, "For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob, [or children of Israel] are not consumed." - Mal. Iii. 6.

It is very true that Solomon lived under the covenant of works, and that the promises of that covenant were conditional, in form, but not in any way to lessen the sovereignty of God, or make it necessary for him to wait their decisions. He has declared the end from the beginning, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And we are expressly informed that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. And hence it is that "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." In giving the ceremonial law to Israel with all its conditional provisions, the precise effect it should have on them was fully known to God; for known unto him are all his works from the foundation of the world. That law was the shadow of things to come, and embraced the types and figures of what should be more clearly understood under the new, the better covenant, which is unconditional, and abounds with God's immutable *wills* and *shalls.* None but temporal blessings, such as corn, wine and oil, were conditionally promised in that covenant, none but temporal curses were conditionally threatened by it. No spiritual blessings ever were or can be promised conditionally, for

they are all embraced in that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure.

Let us now consider the true import of the text in its typical and prophetic application to one who is greater than Solomon. It is not difficult to show that Solomon, in many respects was a brilliant type of Christ: As the son of David and occupant of his throne; as king of Israel; as builder of the temple in Jerusalem, and especially as so identified with the subjects of his government that the great matter of God's presence with Israel was thus connected inseparably with his obedience to all the precepts and commandments of God. Christ, who is the Son of David, in a spiritual sense, is prefigured in this subject, even he shall build the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit a priest upon his throne, &c. (Zech. vi. 13.) This is the key of our subject. Leave Jesus out of the Scriptures, and what would they be to us? But how easy to understand, that the whole matter of the salvation of God's elect, the children of Israel spiritually considered, all rested upon the perfect work of our dear Redeemer. Mark with what force and beauty the text applies to Christ. *Concerning the house which thou art in building.* What house was Jesus in building? His church; for he said, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He shall build the temple of the Lord. Paul says to the church of God, Ye are God's building. Peter say, Of lively stones, built up, a spiritual house, &c. Again, Paul says to the saints at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, "And ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself, (not Solomon) being the chief corner, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." - Eph. ii. 20, 21. The weighty responsibilities resting upon Christ, and which he came down from heaven to execute, were all "concerning the house, which he is in building." Such was the vital relations he bore to his people,

that all the responsibilities resting on him concerned them, as the house which he was in building.

If we understand Christ to be the antitypical Solomon of our text, we see all the responsibilities of our acceptance resting on him. And he says, "Lo, I come! in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God." And in doing the will of God, he was to fulfill all the jots and tittles of the law, to walk in the statutes of that law, to execute the judgments or decisions of the eternal counsel, and to keep all the commandments, and to walk in them. This he undertook, and this he has finished. The law is honored, justice is satisfied. The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake, and the promised results of his obedience are secured to all the children of Israel, that is to all the spiritual seed, for "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." The word which God had spoken to David, his father, as recorded in the eighty-ninth Psalm, and elsewhere, is secured to those for whom he lived and died and arose from the dead. And furthermore it is now certain that God will dwell with his children, and that he will never leave them or forsake them.

The second query proposed, is, "And does it not also convey the idea that it is left entirely optional with Solomon whether or not he will receive the counsel?" If left *entirely* optional with Solomon, then God retained no power of decision, laid aside his own will altogether, and consented to be governed wholly by Solomon's will. Does such a conclusion seem reasonable? Does God work after the counsel of a creature's will? Be astonished, O heavens, that such a question could be for one moment seriously entertained by any rational being. The *option* of Solomon was under the control of God. Solomon's testimony before referred to proves this; besides he says, It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. The preparations of the heart and the answer of the tongue are

both of the Lord. But our querist virtually asks us whether Solomon's heart and actions were governed by the Lord, or the Lord's course governed by Solomon, and seems strangely to favor the idea that God's ways were governed by Solomon.

"This," says our correspondent, "with other similar passages, it appears difficult for me to reconcile with absolute predestination." But why so? If the matter, as you seem to suppose, was left entirely to the option of Solomon, and Solomon decided by his option whether God should dwell with Israel or not, that was predestination; only man is the sovereign, and God obeys. Now, perhaps after all, the Arminians would subscribe to absolute predestination, so defined as to rob God of all controlling government, and place the royal diadem upon the head of a poor, finite man. We do not wonder that those who stumble at the eternal sovereignty of God, should fail to see the harmony of the Scriptures of truth. There is not a text in the Bible that more clearly, fully and unavoidably teaches to our mind the unchanging purpose of God, and his absolute predestination, than this on which we have written these remarks.

The doctrine of predestination does not dispute the application of the commands, exhortations and precepts enjoined by the Scriptures, and demanding obedience; but it shows that if the fear of God is in our hearts, God has there implanted it, and if we be willing or obedient, it is because God has absolutely predestinated that Christ's people shall be willing in the day of his power. And it asserts that it is God that worketh in their hearts, both to *will* and to *do* his good pleasure. Our friend, of course, only asks these questions for information. We will not question his honesty, but pity his deplorable want of understanding of divine things. May the Lord, if consistent with his immutable will, enlighten the eyes of his understanding, that he may see and rejoice in the divine government of the All-Wise and Infinite Jehovah.

Upon the subject of the Absolute Predestination of all things, and the free volition of the human will, many seem to be perplexed. They cannot see how God can positively ordain and control all the actions and movements of men and devils, and yet in such a way as to leave man to act voluntarily and justly accountable to God for his actions. Could we, poor finite beings, comprehend the infinity of God, we might be able to trace his footsteps in the mighty deep, and his ways would no longer be past our finding out. Who will dispute that the feathered tribes of the air move voluntarily from place to place? We can perceive no restraint upon them, yet we are told that not a sparrow can fall to the earth without our heavenly Father. Does God care for or provide for sparrows, attend to the wants of ravens, and number the hairs on our heads, and has he irrevocably ordained that not a hair shall fall to the earth without an order from his throne, and left the final destiny of mankind unsettled and undetermined?

See by the laws of nature with what regularity the marshalled hosts of heaven fill their orbits, and move in their appointed spheres, without collision, for ages, while moving with a rapidity which mocks our vain attempts to comprehend them, and then inquire, Has God in wisdom decreed their every movement, and left the final destiny of man to rest on chance or uncertainty? That Infidels and Arminians should belch out their maniac ravings against the predestination of God, is only what we reasonably expect from them, but that any who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and who believe the doctrine of eternal, unconditional election, can doubt the all-pervading providence of God, is strange indeed to us. Many clear examples are given us in the sacred Scriptures of the absolute purpose and determinate counsel of God, determining beforehand the result of the wicked actions of men and devils, and yet the

perfectly voluntary action of men and devils, in bringing those very results to pass.

Herod acted out the unrestrained wickedness of his murderous heart when he sought to slay the child Jesus, but by his wicked machinations, occasion was furnished for the fulfillment of the Scriptures: "Out of Egypt have I called my son." He also acted without restraint when, by his wicked action in the murder of the infants of his dominion, God caused to be fulfilled the prediction of "Rachel weeping for her children," &c. The brethren of Joseph acted voluntarily in selling him into Egypt, yet God had a design to be accomplished in his being thus conveyed to that place. The Jews acted according to their wicked inclinations when they persecuted the primitive saints, and drove them from their homes, but God made their wicked conduct the occasion of the gospel's being preached everywhere. Our Lord Jesus Christ was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, when the Jews and Romans crucified him with wicked hands.

In view of these examples of the power and absolute government of God over all the events of time, what folly, what madness, what infidelity, for men to deny his predetermination of all things. He is supremely holy, in the broadest sense; but can we believe that to maintain his spotless purity he must yield up his government or any part of it? Must devils be unchained, and all the flood-gates of wickedness thrown open, and *Chance* enthroned to rule in his place, in order to preserve the unblemished glory of the eternal God? Is it not much more difficult to imagine how God's majesty could be sustained, if anything could possibly transpire by chance, or independently of an order from his throne? None can rejoice in spirit that the Lord God Omnipotent doth reign; that he doeth his pleasure in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, who

desire to pluck the crown of ruling power from his head, and place the sacred diadem on *Chance.* Who would feel secure under his protecting providence if he were not the only and blessed Potentate? or how could we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, if we did not know that he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will?

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 342 - 349

II KINGS 20:1-6.

Elder Beebe — Dear Brother: Will you, or some of your many correspondents, please give an explanation of II Kings 20:1-6. It has perplexed me so long that I feel now that I must have an explanation of it. Yet knowing, as I do, how you must be daily harassed by such enquiries, I hesitate even now in sending my request. But if you, or any other kind brother, will grant me an answer, you will be favoring one who, at least, desires to know and to love the truth.

Owensville, Ind.
March 1, 1869.

Reply: To our unknown friend in Owensville, Ind. We have published our views on the text proposed in years which have passed, but as many of the present readers of the "Signs" were not then taking our paper, we will, briefly as we can, repeat substantially what have been our views for many years. The text proposed, and the whole chapter in which it is contained, with but little variation, is recorded in II Kings 20, and in Isaiah 38. In II Kings 20:1-5, it is thus written: "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, 'Thin again and tell Hezekiah, the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy

tears; behold I will heal thee; and on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord."

Hezekiah, as the king of Israel, as the son of David, and as the captain of the people of the Lord, was a type of our Lord Jesus Christ; and only as a type in personating the Savior, could he have used the words of intercession, which were based upon his own personal righteousness, in an acceptable manner before the Lord. The house of Hezekiah, was his family, his affairs as the king of Israel. He was occupying the house of David, which figuratively means the people and church of the Lord. Isaiah, the son of Amoz, represents the law and the prophets which were until John; for all the prophets, and all the law had faithfully declared by the word of the Lord, that Jesus Christ, the anti-type of Hezekiah, should die, and not live. That he should be put to death in the flesh, and then be known no more in the flesh. And he was held by all the law and the prophets bound to set his house in order; whose house, the apostle says to the church, *ye are;*and in doing so his death was inevitable. Heaven and earth could sooner pass away, than the death of Christ could be avoided.

When the testimony of all the law and the prophets was brought to bear on him, showing that it behooved him to suffer all these things and then to enter into his glory, his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death. With such overwhelming sufferings was he to be baptized, that he was straitened until that dreadful immersion should be accomplished. Like Hezekiah, he turned his face to the wall [Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks], and prayed. Thus in meeting the message of his God, as the High Priest of our profession, "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." Hebrews 5:7. Thus

answering to the deep emotion, and dreadful pressure of distress evinced by Hezekiah in the type, he plead with his heavenly Father, with fervency, and being in agony, cried, “O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass.” And he could plead as no other being could. In truth, the words of Hezekiah belonged alone to Jesus. “I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.” This language could only be used typically by Hezekiah, or only so far as he personated Christ; but in all their force they were used by our anti-typical Hezekiah, and they were heard and approved in heaven. He had loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore God, even his God, anointed him with the oil of joy above his fellows.

Scarcely had the law and the prophets concentrated the full force of their message upon the devoted Lamb of God before a message was dispatched from heaven’s high eternal throne announcing that his intercession was heard, and that the son of Amoz must not retire until he had declared from the mouth of God that Jesus our Lord should arise and go into the house of the Lord on the third day. It was not enough that the holy prophets should predict the sufferings and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, but they must also tell of the glory that should follow. Thus when our risen Lord opened the understanding of his disciples, he explained to them in all the Old Testament Scriptures, the things concerning himself; that thus it was written, and therefore thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise on the third day.

In the type, Hezekiah came only to the doors of death; but Jesus, of whom he was the type, “Entered its iron gates, and took its bars away.” The fifteen years added to the days of Hezekiah shows in the figurative import of the type that Jesus our Lord should arise from the dead on the third day, and go into his Father’s house which hath many mansions,

and that the gospel dispensation should be added to his Mediatorial days. “He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken, And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he bath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.” Isaiah 53:8-11.

In these brief remarks we have not attempted to meet the silly lucubrations of Arminians, nor the daring presumption of those who dispute the immutability of God, by laboring to make it appear that the prayers of men have power to change the decrees of God; but we have labored rather to elucidate the subject so as to afford instruction and comfort to those who fear the Lord and delight in the knowledge of the truth.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 15, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 382 – 384

THE LAW

The Law: We proposed in our last to notice some remarks of brother Tufts concerning the *moral law,* which are found on the first page of that number. Not however in a spirit of controversy, for we have been pleased and edified in the series of articles which he is now supplying on I John 1:6,7. But in his last article we confess, as did Peter in regard to the writing of Paul, were "some things which are hard to be understood;" especially by those who like ourself, are "dull of hearing." Those points which are the most obscure to our mind were first, what is called the moral law, said to be created by the fingers of God, and to constitute a part of the nature of man, - begotten of Adam, and transmitted though him to his posterity; and still of binding power over believers who are under the law to Christ, etc. The terms *moral* and *moral law,* as they are not found in the scriptures, cannot be defined by any scriptural rule of interpretation. We must enquire of Webster, Buck, Paley or some other recognized lexicographer for the meaning, as used by theologians; but unhappily for the enquirer, these authors do not fully agree in their definitions, and if they did, their authority is not quite sufficient for Old School Baptists who are accustomed to appeal "to the law and to the testimony." That man was created under law to God, and as a creature of God, subject to his authority, appears fully demonstrated by the fact that he sinned; and sin is a transgression of the law. But if the law which Adam transgressed was begotten of him, and constituted a part of himself, then his transgression, we would think was a sin against himself, and not against God. We will not contend that the law under which man was created was born of God; but we must, until otherwise instructed, contend that that law proceeded from God who alone possessed a law-making power; and so being God's law or rule of government over

man as his creature, the transgression of it was a sin against God; and subject to the penalty provided in that law for the transgression of it. If we have correctly understood the apostle, this law by which is the knowledge of sin, and the penalty of which is death, is called “the law of sin and death.” All mankind being in Adam, and as brother Tufts justly remarked, being Adam, were in the transgression. The very first transgression was that of all mankind. Hence, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. We do not perceive how this law was begotten of Adam. It proceeded from the legislation of God himself. The Sinai covenant, or the laws of God dispensed to Israel, were not given to add anything to the force of the law which we in Adam had transgressed; for from Adam to Moses death already reigned. “The sting of death is sin.” “Sin is the transgression of the law.” “And the strength of sin is the law.” Hence it is written, “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Death passed on all men, before the first son or daughter of Adam was born, even on them who are not yet born. The law which was given to Israel by Moses, was added, or entered that the offense might abound. “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin taking occasion by the commandment, or law, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.”

Although this law of sin and death was not born of God as was the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, yet the apostle says it was spiritual: “For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin (Romans 7:14).” Therefore if this is the law which our beloved brother calls the moral law, it was not begotten of man, who is carnal, because it is spiritual. And that which is carnal cannot beget that which is spiritual.

That God spake to Adam through this law, we will not dispute; but whether so or otherwise, God did talk with him in the garden in the cool of the day, we must so believe, for so it is expressly written.

That the spirituality of the law is concealed in its letter from the understanding of the carnal mind of man, we fully believe. But when the sinner is quickened by the law of the spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, its spirituality appears. It comes then in its spirit, not merely in its letter. Paul says: "I was alive once without the law." Not without the letter of it; for he was brought up under its letter, a Pharisee of the strictest sect. "But when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." "And the commandment which was ordained unto life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful (Romans 7:9-13)."

This law holds dominion over a man as long as he liveth, or until it slays him, as it did Paul; but its dominion can be extended no further. "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye shall be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we shall bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the

motions of sin, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:1-6)."

Christ has redeemed his people as well from the dominion as from the condemnation and wrath of the law, or it would not allow us to be one flesh with the risen Savior. That in which we were held in matrimonial bonds must be dead to us before we can be thus identified with him that is raised from the dead. Christ came under the law to redeem his people from the law. In doing this, "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." This seed of Abraham is the body which was prepared for him, as his own body in which he bare the sins of many, in which he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, abolished death and brought immortality to light. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to promise. Ye are then "Buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4)." "For the love of Christ constraineth us because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea though we have known Christ after the flesh," (as under the law) "yet henceforth know we him no more. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature (II Corinthians *5:14-17)."* Thus married to, and one flesh with, the risen Jesus. Moses is dead, and Joshua leads. We are raised up together with our risen and living Husband, and made to set together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Crucified with him, dead with him, buried with him by baptism into death, quickened together with Christ, raised up

together, living in his life. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus; who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (Romans 8:1-4).”

This law of the Spirit of life is born of God, it is spiritual for it is in Christ Jesus. It is a ruling, reigning and governing law, not written on tables of stone, but in the hearts of the saints, who are also in Christ Jesus, and born of God. Married to him that is risen from the dead, and they twain are one flesh. They are no more under the law, but under grace. Can the bride, the married wife of the Lamb, any longer transgress the authority of her old dead and buried husband? Must the living members of the risen Jesus still be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order that they may be saved? Has she any desire to dig up and submit to the government of that former husband, who never had anything but bondage and curses for her, now that she is one with the living husband, who never curses but always blesses? Now can the believer who is cut off from the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, and known no more after the flesh, transgress a law that has no dominion or authority over him? “This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith (Galatians 3:2)?” “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage (Galatians 5:1).”

The reader will perceive that the greatest portion of this article is in harmony with the views of brother Tufts, but there are some points to which we desire to call his

attention, that he may make them clear, if correct, and yield them if they cannot be sustained by the scriptures of truth; for we are sure he does not wish to contend for anything that will not bear the strictest scrutiny.

Middletown, N.Y.
February 15, 1865.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 148 - 152

THE LEADERSHIP SYSTEM IN JAMAICA.

WE have devoted much of the present and of the preceding number to the disclosure of the corruption and abomination of the missionary speculation at Jamaica; and truly we may say in the language brother West has quoted from Jeremiah at the head of his communication, "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests (or clergy which are so called) bear rule by their means; and my people (or those who claim to be the people of God) love to have it so."

The awful profanation of the sacred name of religion to cover the most base and deceptive robbery of the poor, ignorant, superstitious sons of Africa, that has ever soiled the pages of Baptist history, is indeed a *wonderful and horrible thing*. Modern mission advocates have been prophesying for many years the conversion of the world through the operation of their missionary movements, which prophecy is false; for salvation is of the Lord, and there is no salvation in any other name. By means of this false prophecy the clergy are enabled to bear rule, and although they rule as with a rod of iron, yet men are so extravagantly fond of being deceived that they love to have it so. We cannot offend them more than by exposing their errors and holding forth the truth. The disclosure made by Mr. Weston is a very fair illustration of the above remark. From a residence at Jamaica as a missionary for two years, Mr. Weston was certainly qualified to speak from his own knowledge of the facts in the case. As a New School Baptist, and as a missionary himself, it cannot be reasonably supposed that he would have any inducement to exaggerate; and from the candor evinced in the tone and spirit of his writings we have great reason to believe that his

statements were made with the utmost caution, and that he was ready to make every possible allowance for every circumstance which could weigh in favor of the missionaries.

By reference to our 16th number of the present volume, the reader will find the letter of Mr. Weston, in which he charges the English Missionaries with extorting from their poor deluded people vast sums of money, which in the aggregate amounts to $6,500 annually for each English Missionary, by making them believe that their salvation depends on the punctual payment of their ticket money, from which source this immense revenue is derived; with instituting the office of leaders, whose duty it is to make proselytes, teach them the questions and answers required to be known as a prerequisite to baptism, and to set them off by raising them from their knees and saying, "I raise you up to newness of life in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost." Mr. Weston charges them also not only with failing to preach to the people the necessity of the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, the blood and righteousness of Christ as the ground of their justification with Christ, &c., but also with opposing others and censuring him for Preaching these things to them. From nearly two years' acquaintance he says, "Aside from their schools I can see very little to choose between their religion and the basest Catholicism."

When these charges were first published, an attempt was made to evade their force by charging the Old School Baptists with having fabricated them to raise a prejudice against missionary operations, but as this slander against the Old School did not take, the letter of Weston was passed about through nearly all the New School prints. This brought out several communications from various quarters in defence of the English Missionaries at Jamaica, among which is that of C. H. Hoskin, and those documents and apologies of the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society; and from all

that we have seen, and all that we have presented to our readers of their defence, to us it appears that so far from invalidating the testimony of Weston they have established it. First, they give Weston a first rate character for truth and veracity. Second, they admit the existence of the leadership system, with many other things of which Weston complained. Third, they admit that tickets are given and exchanged as Weston has represented, and that when these tickets are renewed a certain sum of money is expected. They attempt to justify the practice by saying that the situation and circumstances of the blacks at Jamaica require a different provision from any mentioned in the New Testament, and some of them have asserted as much. Mr. W. Hume for instance says, “To do without either (tickets or leaders) would be impossible, if the cause of Christ is to prosper.” This declaration is handed over by the committee to the public, as a justification of the persons implicated, showing that the committee and the Missionary Society in general are agreed with the sentiment.

New Vernon, N.Y.
Dec. 1. 1842

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 101 – 103

THE LEADERSHIP SYSTEM IN JAMAICA.

(*Concluded*.)

How far does this testimony fall short of establishing the testimony of Weston On their defence, the accused party virtually admits that the provisions of grace, the blood of Christ, the love of God and the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost are all ineffectual, and that without the leaders and tickets it is impossible that the cause of God should prosper at Jamaica. According to this notion, the God of heaven is charged with imperfection, either a want of know ledge and wisdom to understand the condition of the people at Jamaica, or a failure to provide in the economy of redemption such indispensable things as leaders and tickets.

From the first document submitted by the committee they prove that charges of the same nature of those preferred by Weston have been made from time to time during the last nine or ten years. Now Weston certainly cannot be the scape-goat for all these reports, as his connection with that station, we believe, commenced in 1840, and for eight years previous to 1840, according to their own showing, they knew that their missionaries were charged with the same things; and a circular was prepared and circulated among the members of the craft to silence all misgivings on the subject. These often repeated reports have been constantly winked at by the committee because “They came through the intervention, in most instances, of third parties.” To entitle charges to the consideration of the committee they must come from the implicated parties themselves.

If charges brought against the missionaries by a third party are not valid in the estimation of the committee, the

missionaries have nothing to apprehend; for all possible means of disclosure is then cut oft except it come either through themselves or their deluded dupes. Any other channel would involve a third party.

Another reason for winking at the charges which have been frequently reiterated and widely circulated for nine or ten years, is that such charges have been *general!* Those who have made those charges have specified no particular church. Hence because the charges have been preferred against all the missionaries in Jamaica generally, they have been disregarded. Mr. W.'s charges are also general, but being publicly challenged in regard to them, he has now made them specific, and in answer to Mr. Hoskin he comes out with names and churches. By so doing, that impediment to a fair investigation is removed. Well, what now; does the committee come up to the work? No: they only make public a circular previously written to be read only by a limited number of the friends of that mission, and, as far as that document affects the subject at all, it goes to confirm the statements of Weston, and show the readiness of the committee to countenance the abominable wickedness and villainy of their hire ling swindlers. "In no case," says the committee, "has a definite charge been made, but it has been investigated, and the committee have been seeking evidence from all quarters on the general questions these charges involve." If, according to this statement, charges have been investigated, such investigation must have resulted in the conviction of the accused party, as from their own showing they have elicited facts sufficiently heinous and in *quantum sufficit* to establish every charge preferred by Weston and the manner in which they have been seeking evidence from all quarters may be duly estimated by the manner in which Weston is treated for daring to disclose the facts in the case; and Weston asserts that he was forewarned of the obloquy that would be heaped on him if he made the

disclosure, and for some time shrunk from the duty from that consideration. And now that he has surmounted his fears and dared in this matter to be honest, how is his testimony regarded by this *seeking* committee? Why just as he had been forewarned that it would be regarded: every possible means is taken to invalidate his testimony, and to make him, if possible, believe that his own eyes and ears have borne him false testimony.

The grand secret of the unparalleled success the missionaries have realized in convert making is also in an incidental way leaked out the great zeal of the missionaries in the abolition cause in Jamaica, together with the predilection of the blacks in favor of immersion, and not the outpouring of the Spirit as at Pentecost, has produced their harvest; and hence Mr. Gourney says “they (the missionaries) are now reaping their reward,” &c. And Mr. Weston testifies that instead of preaching Christ to the people, or requiring of their converts a declaration of what God had done for them, they only require them to answer certain interrogatories, or that their leaders should answer for them; and that the grand confession of their faith consisted in saying, as they were taught to say, “Me feel good since de leader set me off,” and this, together with the prompt payment of their ticket money, was enough to entitle them to baptism. There was more truth than poetry in the admission of Mr. Hume, that the English Missionaries could not do without such helps as leaders, tickets. &c.

To silence all fears as to the purity of the Jamaica Missionaries, the committee claims that twenty-seven out of thirty of our missionaries repel the charges and assert the innocence of themselves, while the other three admit the justice of the charges; and the admission or testimony of the latter is also strongly corroborated by the testimony of others who are not our missionaries, and by the existence of facts

admit ted, which they have alleged to exist, and which Mr. Hume considers indispensably connected with the success of the English Missionaries. Should a banditti of thirty men stand indicted for robbery, and on trial before any jury of our country, and twenty-seven of the thirty plead not guilty, and three of the number turn states' evidence, admit the whole truth, and their evidence before the court and jury be corroborated by the testimony of numerous disinterested witnesses, would any such jury dare to acquit the whole band because a majority of them refused to admit the fact? Such is the real weight of the testimony pro and con in regard to the accused missionaries.

Having copied in our columns the charges as preferred against the Jamaica Missionaries, and the defence of them by themselves and their pliant committee, together with brother West's very pertinent notes upon the defence, we shall dismiss the further consideration of the subject for the present, and inquire what evidence can, be produced to show that the missionaries of any other humanly devised establishment are less corrupt than those at Jamaica The institution of leaders and the traffic in tickets are no more unscriptual than the missionary society is, and until corrupt fountains can be made to send forth pure waters, and corrupt and poisonous trees can produce healthy and pure fruit, these institutions must abound with corruption and iniquity.

New Vernon, N.Y.
Dec. 15. 1842

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 103 – 106

LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE.

THESE words of apostolic admonition to the whole brotherhood of the gospel church, demand our serious consideration. The love of God shed abroad in the hearts of his children is undoubtedly the love intended by the qualifying term, *brotherly.* Such love we are not called upon to originate: this would be impossible, for it is the sovereign gift of God. But the admonition implies an obligation on the part of brethren to cherish its action by carefully avoiding whatever is calculated to oppose it. The frequent exhortations to the saints on this subject, show the importance of our watchfulness against those fruitful sources of bitterness, strife and contention which have ever been found so unfriendly to the spirit and temper of the meek and humble followers of the Lamb of God. The experience of all the saints, from the primitive age of the church of Christ to the present time, has always encountered a very strong propensity of the flesh warring against the spirit, and opposing the free expression and salutary effects of brotherly love. At an early day John and James, these eminent apostles of our Lord, joined their over-anxious mother in desiring for them an elevation above their brethren in the kingdom of the Redeemer, and by this imprudent step subjected themselves to the reproof of their Lord and to the great displeasure of their brethren. If these two disciples, personally present with the Master, displayed a disposition so hostile to the continuance of brotherly love; caught we not, in this age in which error abounds, and the love of many seems to be waxing cold, to seek out and endeavor to apprise our brethren of the existing causes of dissension and bitterness among the saints! That there now exists among us some things which are calculated to hinder and dampen the ardor

of christian love and fellowship, cannot be reasonably doubted. And that whatsoever so interrupts our mutual love robs us of one of the brightest evidences of our vital union to Christ, is established by the declaration, “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” Again, “Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” “A new commandment give I unto you, that ye love one another.” How very important it is then that we should carefully avoid giving offence to the children of God. We have witnessed, greatly to our sorrow, many things of late calculated to remind us of the apostle’s words: “If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” In cultivating harmony we are not at liberty in any case to transcend the gospel rule, or to barter away either the truth or order of the gospel for the sake of peace; for peace procured at such expense is but a treacherous alliance with the enemies of our Lord. No one governed by the spirit of truth would require us to depart from truth or gospel order to secure his love; none but an enemy to God and to his cause and people would ask such sacrifice at our hands.

That brotherly love for which we contend is to be continued upon the principles laid down in the case of those added to the church at the day of Pentecost, viz.: those who gladly received the word and were baptized, continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship and breaking of bread, &c. A steadfast continuance in the apostles’ doctrine is then an indispensable prerequisite to that fellowship called brotherly love. By the apostles’ doctrine we are, however, to understand more than a simple admission of the correctness of the sentiments set forth in their instructions, in relation to the character and attributes of God, the purpose and election of grace, predestination, calling, &c.; all the instructions, admonitions and reproofs taught by them belong to their doctrine, and all are alike essential to the preservation of

brotherly love. If, therefore, while we contend for the doctrine of our Lord, we thrust with side and shoulder so that the weak and lame are turned out of the way, we oppose ourselves to the continuance of brotherly love. Or if, on the other hand, we contend for perfect harmony and a disregard for heresies or departure from the faith, or wink at innovations, &c., we still oppose brotherly love, and all our energies are enlisted in the promotion, a false and treasonable amalgamation with that and those from which and whom God has commanded us to be disconnected and separate.

We are glad to see that a general disposition is manifested among our brethren to arrest the heated discussions which have been carried on through our paper for some time past. Our allusion is general, we mean to personate none. A very commendable zeal has been manifested to sustain what each writer has regarded as fundamental truth; but that zeal has not in every instance been tempered with as great a degree of meekness and brotherly love as the gospel will admit. While we honestly believe (and act upon the principle) that right hands and right eyes are to be sacrificed when the order of the gospel and the laws of our Commander require it, we are far from being convinced that the war dogs ought to be let loose upon all occasions when undesigning brethren differ from our views, when such difference does not amount absolutely to heresy. It is not unfrequently the case that brethren have different ways of expressing the same things, and in some cases the different form of expression may, by a critical construction of the language employed, seem fairly to involve serious, and perhaps irreconcilable, discrepance, when at the same time such brethren are in reality as well united in their real sentiments as can be reasonably expected while encompassed with imperfections.

(Concluded.)

NEW VERNON, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1842.

RESUMING the subject commenced in our last number, we wish to show the necessity of a strict observance of the admonition at the head of our article in all matters of correspondence through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. The principle of brotherly love is that which renders a correspondence desirable and pleasant; but in the absence of love there can be nothing in a public correspondence calculated to edify, refresh or comfort the children of the kingdom of our God. In the absence of brotherly love, some motive of an opposite character must predominate; and can we, under the influence of any spirit hostile to the lovely temper of the gospel of Christ, contribute to the upbuilding of the saints in their most holy faith? As well might we attempt to overcome the corruptions of our depraved nature by gratifying every evil propensity and unholy lust. Why do our brethren who are scattered abroad throughout the whole world desire to hear of each other's welfare? Why do they when grieved, afflicted, tempted, tried and persecuted, wish to speak out and give vent to the painful sensations of their hearts? It is because they feel assured that wherever the winds of heaven may waft their communications, they shall receive the sympathies of those whom they love in the Lord; and because they expect in return from them expressions of their sympathy and words of consolation and kindness. It was to facilitate such correspondence, and to expose and oppose the prevailing abominations of anti-christ, the publication of our paper was proposed and commenced; and when its publication shall cease to facilitate these object, it ought to be discontinued.

For several years after the commencement, our paper was hailed with joy by the oppressed children of Zion; and

thousands who had thought themselves left quite alone in the field, were sought out, and through our columns introduced to each other. Thousands have testified of the joy and encouragement they have realized through the communications of their brethren communicated through this humble medium. Brotherly love has been made to abound, and the most clear and emphatic declarations of kind and christian fellow ship have been exchanged from Maine to Georgia, and from the Atlantic to the remotest western settlements. Brotherly love has been greatly developed by the enlargement of acquaintance with each other's situation, experience, faith, order and trials. But if, by the present prevalence of iniquity through-out our land, the love of brethren is suffered to wax cold, the utility of a vehicle of correspondence will be very seriously changed. If that kind and generous love and fellowship of the brethren is to give place to discords, animosity and contention, the service of our sheet will not be required to tell the lamentable tale in Gath or publish it in the streets of Askelon, where it can make none but the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph or rejoice. Those brethren who wish the continuance of our paper, and desire it to subserve the general interest of the cause of God and truth, are requested to take this subject into prayerful consideration.

We should profit by our experience: those things which have interrupted the harmony and brotherly love of the saints, and gendered strife and acrimony should be avoided; and whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, we should think on these things.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
Sept. 1, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 57 - 61

LETTER OF MR. GARD, AND REPLY.

Lebanon, Ohio, Dec. 2, 1841.

MR. BEEBE. - Sir: - You will discontinue the number of the "Signs of the Times" directed to S. Gard, as I consider the general sentiment or doctrine which they embody opposed to "salvation by grace," as taught and exemplified by the inspired apostles. The very first principle of the doctrine which they advocate is evidently wrong, inasmuch as it substitutes *feelings* for *faith.* It requires no stretch of thought to discover that the very first promise of the new covenant which their author pretends to venerate so much is at utter and eternal variance with the rejection of the law as a rule of life. That first promise is, "I will put my laws in their minds, and write them in their hearts, saith the Lord;" a fact which is fatal to all such unholy applications of the doctrine of grace. In a word, their doctrine is the hope of a salvation from that holy salvation which is "the end" of election, redemption, and regeneration.

These are my humble convictions.
Yours respectfully,
W.V. H. GARD.

REPLY: WE notice the preceding, not for the mere gratification of our ambition for such flattering expressions of benevolent sentiment and gracious feeling towards, as it so *feelingly* breathes forth; but more particularly with a view to commend the candor of the writer in so frankly avowing his decided preference for Judaism, *alias* Arminianism, to the doctrine of the gospel; and his readiness to expose his ignorance of the difference between the two covenants - the law of the spirit of life, written and engraved by the Holy

Spirit upon the fleshly tables of the hearts of the children of God, and that which was written on tables of stone, addressed to the carnal Israelites, which was a shadow of good things to come, and destined to wax old and vanish away when the true tabernacle should be revealed. While others of the same Arininian fraternity may accord in feelings and sentiment with Mr. Gard, few of them have been so open in exposing their real preference for the bondage of Ishmael over the liberty of the sons of God. While we commend so much of the letter, and the generosity of its author, in attempting to convert us from what he seems to consider the error of our way, there are some little inaccuracies in some of his remarks which, although liable to occur in the productions of the wisest and best of writers, require some correction. As Mr. G. has the honor, (if honor it be,) to be the first to charge us with opposing the doctrine of salvation by grace, "as taught and exemplified by the inspired apostles," he will confer a lasting obligation on us by pointing out very clearly and distinctly every particular in which he finds us hostile to that doctrine, and every point of discrepance between us and the inspired apostles. And if the very first principle of the doctrine which "they" (the editor of the "Signs of the Times") advocate, is *evidently* wrong, and substitutes feelings for faith, we conclude that none can be more competent to demonstrate the fact than the man who made the discovery. We call on Mr. G., therefore, to come forward immediately to the work. If *no stretch of thought* it requires to discover that the very first promise of the new covenant, which their author pretends to venerate so much, is at utter and eternal variance with the rejection of the law as a rule of life," we repeat it, Mr. Gard is eminently qualified for the undertaking. And when he shall succeed in proving that the law of Moses to the Jews, the Sinai covenant, or the ceremonial economy is by divine authority, to be observed as the rule of the christian's life and practice, and that the law which God has promised to write in the hearts of his children, under the new

covenant dispensation, is only a transcript of the law of sin and death, we shall have no further use for the New Testament.

The fact that God will write his law in the mind, and in the hearts of his children, Mr G. says “is fatal to all such unholy applications of the doctrines of grace.” We are not sufficiently learned to understand the meaning of this last sentence, especially as he has represented us as discarding instead of applying the doctrine of grace. Who can he mean? “In a word,” says our sapient writer, “their” (meaning the editor of the ‘Signs of the Times,’) “doctrine is the hope of a salvation from that holy salvation which is the end of election, redemption and regeneration.

What an overwhelming summing up! What extraordinary talent for cramming the world into a nut shell, the entire doctrine of the Old School Baptists screwed up into one word, and that one word spun out into a sentence, and that sentence big with meaning, explicitly declaring what mortals. never knew, what angels never thought.

But taking our generous friend upon his own ground, seeing he claims for himself what he denies to us, viz: to be consistent with the doctrine of salvation by grace, &c. We will demand of him, in the words of the apostle, “Tell me, ye (thou) that desirest to be under the law, dost thou hear what the law saith?” In what precept of the law is faith, repentance, baptism, the Lord’s supper, or any other sentiment or ordinance of the gospel church enjoined? If the law is the rule of life to believers, then instead of what Christ and the apostles have enjoined upon the gospel church, she should teach, and require all her members to be circumcised, with the circumcision of that law, in their flesh; they should maintain the priesthood of Aaron, offer their sacrifices as did the Jews; they should go up to Jerusalem, (literally) to

worship, as often as did the Jews; they should observe days, and new moons, Sabbaths, meats, drinks, and divers washings, for the purification of the flesh. They should exact an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot, blood for blood, life for life, &c., and not pray for their enemies, nor forgive them. The law shows no pity, neither should they; the law curses transgressors, so should they. For every failure to do the whole law, the law demands that the offender should die, and that the sentence be executed by those who are under the law as the rule of their life. Mr. Gard is, therefore, by his law, required to execute the work of death wherever he finds offenders, and if he fail to execute to the full extent of what law demands, himself must die.

What charming harmony this with the doctrine of salvation by grace, as taught by inspired apostles; and especially where the inspired apostles declare, “By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified” - Gal. ii. 16. “This only would I learn of you, received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish, having begun In the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?” - Gal. iii. 2, 3. “I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law, Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace.” - Gal. v.3, 4. “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith; but after that faith is come, we are no more under the schoolmaster.” - Gal. iii. 23, 25. “But if ye are led by the spirit, ye are not under the law.”

How now, friend Gard, did you ever read these scriptures? Well, just turn over and read the second chapter of Paul to the Colossians - read the chapter through; and then, if your courage fail you not, accuse the old apostle Paul of opposing the doctrine of salvation by grace, and smack it right into his

teeth, that, if he teach that the church is not under the law, but under grace; then his doctrine can be summed up in a word to mean no more nor less than that he hopes to be saved from that salvation which is connected with election, redemption, regeneration, &c. But (privately between ourselves) we advise you, before encountering the old apostle, to stop and count the cost; he will not let you off as we do. Better not be in a hurry. Return your quill to the goose from whence it was plucked, she will have a better use of it; and when you have done this, tony yourself at Jericho, or at some other place remote from Zion, until your beard be grown.

NEW VERNON, N. Y.,
January 1, 1842.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 740 – 744

LETTER FROM ELDER SAMUEL TROTT

Our readers will be pleased to learn that we have at length received a letter from our venerable and beloved father in Israel, and to be informed that he still lives, and is in the enjoyment of ordinary health. Living in the vicinity of Fairfax C. H., Virginia, the unhappy war between the two sections of our country caused a suspension of mailing facilities, so that from the time the war broke out all correspondence between him and us has been cut off until recently; the Federal Government now occupying that section of Virginia, has re-established a post office at Fairfax C. H.

It is well known that the contending armies have been located during a large part of the time in his immediate vicinity, and the ground has been alternately occupied by both parties, and for several months, in order to be where he could get to and attend the several churches of his pastoral charge, he has been obliged to remain absent from his home, as the pickets of the armies were stationed for a long time between his residence and the churches of his charge.

For the satisfaction of his numerous friends, we extract from his private letter to us, which is dated June 26, 1862, the following:

"Myself and family are in usual health, excepting I have at present a cold, and I find that age is fast weakening my bodily strength, and, probably my mind: though that is a something we are not so apt *to* discover ourselves, except in regard *to* memory. Exposed as we have been, in being contiguous to the armies of both sides, we have been remarkably preserved from insults, and from being plundered. I can but be astonished at the goodness of God in

thus shielding and protecting us, and admire that we should have been thus favored above others around, when the least deserving it at his hands.

"I have not seen brother Leachman for some months, though I hear from him frequently. Living so nigh Manassas Junction, he has been much annoyed and interrupted. Since the advance of the Federal Army *to* that place he has had, with his family, *to* leave his home, and seek a residence in a more retired place. He has not been privileged *to* preach but little for the last few months.

I have received several numbers of the *Signs of the Times* from friends in Alexandria and Washington. And from what I learn through them, most of our brethren are still living. It is a favor granted by their heavenly Father, or it would not have been so. Yet there can be but little personal happiness anticipated in living in these times, only as any may hope *to* live *to* see the result of what God is bringing about by this war."

Middletown, N.Y.,
July 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 211 - 212

LETTERS

Rippon, Wisconsin, Jan. 12, 1860.

Friend Beebe: Although a stranger, yet I take the liberty of addressing you. I happened to get a few copies of your paper, through a friend, a short time ago; I have taken much pleasure in reading them; they have unfolded to my mind many things which have always appeared hidden things to me. I feel that it is the true doctrine which you defend. I am placed in a very unpleasant situation at present, and I would be pleased to have your views in regard to what action I should take in the matter. In the spring of 1857 I became awakened to a sense of my lost condition, and indulged a hope that Christ had washed away my sins, and that through him I had obtained forgiveness. I felt that it was necessary I should unite with the church. The question arose in my mind as to what church I should join. I became convinced there was but one mode of baptism. Thus far I thought I was a Baptist, but then I found a great wall in that church, which I could not get over, which was the doctrine of election. I had a conversation with the pastor of the Baptist church, and he gave me to understand that their doctrine was "softened down a great deal" from that of the Old School, and, in fact, as he explained it, there was more of the Arminian doctrine about it than there was of the Regular Baptists'. I united with the church, and for a while thought I enjoyed myself in attending prayer and covenant meetings; but I soon began to study their doctrine, and I felt that it was impossible to make it harmonize; one portion was in direct conflict with the other. I believe that I tried as hard to believe it as any one ever did, but I could not reconcile my mind to both portions, but found that the Arminian portion of it suited my views the best, yet still I could not rest satisfied with that. I often doubted that God had spoken peace to my soul, and felt that I was

wandering in darkness, and could not discern truth from error. I read the Bible, but it was a sealed book to me, I could not understand it, I thought at times that it taught the free-will doctrine, and then again I would find passages which were so plain on election that I could not get around; and thus matters passed along for two years or more. I became cold and indifferent, neglecting the prayer and covenant meetings; I felt that I could not enjoy myself in the meetings of the church; I could not feel the same interest that I did when I first united with the church. I saw so much of the follies and fashions of the world in the church that I was led to doubt that the Spirit of the Lord was with them; they were so mixed up with the world.

About six weeks ago I began to get awakened as to the course that I was pursuing; I felt that I was not doing my duty as a church member or a christian. I chanced to read an article in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on God's electing grace, wherein was quoted many passages of Scripture which seemed new to me. I then began to read the Bible anew; it seemed that the scales had fallen from my eyes, and the Bible was a new book to me. Although I had read a chapter every morning and evening for nearly three years, and read it a considerable besides in the meantime, yet it suddenly seemed to unfold a new doctrine to me, there seemed to be so much there that I had never seen before. The doctrine of election was written so plain that I wondered that I had never seen it before. I felt that I could not remain with the church, believing they held erroneous doctrines. I attended the church meetings and asked to be dismissed, but was told there was no such thing as withdrawing from the church, and that I could not get out of the church unless by expulsion or death. I have since had a conversation with the pastor, and he told me he did not think it was profitable to be looking after those points of doctrine. He thought it was so designed by God that christians should differ, for if they all believed in

one doctrine they would become careless, and would not read the Scriptures; he said he believed in election as strong as any Old School Baptist, but he went farther; he believed in man's free agency. I told him I could not make it harmonize. He said he could not, but seemed to think it was immaterial. I cannot feel at home in the church, nor I do not feel it my privilege to commune with them. I do not wish to be recognized as a member, but do not know what action to take, for they will not dismiss me, but still wish me to remain with them, but I cannot, for I feel that the church is groping in darkness, and they they do not hold the true doctrine as taught by the apostles. I feel that I have a hope in Jesus, and that if ever I am saved, it would not be anything that I have done, or can do, for when I would do good, evil is before me, but that it must be entirely by grace through Jesus Christ. Please give your views in regard to what course I should pursue in regard to the church, and oblige.

HENRY M. LOVELESS.

Reply: The trying circumstances which so greatly perplex our friend, are by no means strange or unusual. Very many of God's dear children have in their early experience been allured by what they have mistaken for the church, the doctrine and the ordinances of the kingdom of Christ, and have afterwards been enlightened to see their mistake, and to feel themselves to be starving in a foreign land. Some of the children of God are seemingly born at once into a clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, but very many are brought to rejoice in their early love, their burden of guilt is removed, their deep depression of mind relieved, and they feel an assurance that their sins are forgiven, and that love which transports them, like the infant gaze of a new-born babe, seems to regard everything which professes the name of Christ as equally lovely. The unrenewed nature which remains in them is still fond of a work-mongrel system, and

they are easily drawn into the snares of the enemy. But if they have indeed passed from death unto life, the Lord will not suffer them to live comfortably in such company, or to feed and fatten on such doctrine. That which is born of God can only feed on the Bread of Life which comes down from God, while earthly religion can feed and feast on earthly things. As all the children of the kingdom shall be taught of God, and as every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Christ, so those who have been scattered in the dark and cloudy day, shall be gathered by our gracious Shepherd's arm, and carried in his bosom.

Our friend appeals to us for counsel. We refer him to 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18: "Wherefore, come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you. And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." As to the manner of coming out, no letter of dismission or of commendation is required. If they be the church of God they will listen to his word, obey his precepts, walk in his statues, and maintain the doctrine, order and ordinances of the gospel, and then there will be no occasion for coming out. But if they only have a form of godliness and deny the power thereof, then from such, God's children are commanded to turn away. If our friend can regard the people with whom he has stood connected, as the church of Christ, then he is bound to remain with them and be subject to their rules and authority, but if he is convinced that they are not the church of Christ, although he may indulge the hope that there are some of God's children among them, he is commanded to come out and be separate from them.

Their expulsion has no terror in it. It is but the withdrawal of a professed fellowship, a mere nominal fellowship, on their part, as, if we understand him, he has already withdrawn his fellowship from them. How then could they give, or how

could he consistently receive from them a letter of dismission in fellowship? If there is fellowship, why come out? And if there be no fellowship, why ask for a letter certifying full communion and fellowship?

With the statement contained in the above letter, any Old School or Regular Baptist church would receive him on a profession of his faith as a candidate for gospel baptism, the same as though he had never been connected with a false church, if satisfied with the relation of his christian experience. Of course, the Old Order of Baptists cannot recognize the baptism administered by those outside the fellowship of what we regard to be the church of God, for if their baptism is valid, then their order and standing are also valid, and there is no occasion for leaving them. But if convinced that they are not the church of God, as you had supposed them to be when you joined them, and from a conviction of this you are constrained to come out from them, remember that in coming out you are to be separate, and to touch not the unclean thing. We wish to deal tenderly, but at the same time honestly and faithfully with our inquiring correspondent, on this subject. If now convinced that the church with which you have been connected is impure and unclean, and not such an one as you would now apply to for baptism, certainly their administration of baptism must be unclean, for it is written, “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.” - Job xiv. 4. If then the church be unclean, she cannot sustain a clean ministry, and if her minister be unclean, the thing administered by him is also unclean, and however honestly or with however much sincerity you received the administration at his unclean hands, in the reception of it you touched an unclean thing. Do not then bring the unclean thing out with you, but cut entirely loose, and discard all that is polluted.

While on this subject we will also notice a letter of inquiry, which we have had on hand for a long time, and which involves the same subject in part as the above. The letter is from our brother, Elder James Strickland, of Indiana. The following is a copy:

Gibson Co., Ind., Aug. 18, 1859.

Dear Brother Beebe: The universal practice of the Old School Baptists in this part of the country has been, and is now, to reject the baptism of all other denominations of professed christians, on the ground of the illegality of the administration of the ordinance; and therefore we require them to be baptized. Now we will suppose a case, about which I desire counsel from my brethren, for I feel somewhat difficulted on the subject, and do not know how to act. The case is this: A man comes to your church and asks for membership, telling you that he loves your church, and your doctrine, that he is willing to obey her rules, but that he has been a member of the Missionary Baptists, and was baptized in the fellowship of said church by a man that he believed was a christian, (and you believed the same) and was called of God to preach, and that if he ever knew anything about regeneration, and sanctifying grace, it was before he was baptized, and that in his baptism he verily believed that he received the answer of a good conscience toward God, and was fully and entirely satisfied with his baptism, but notwithstanding all this, he was willing to be baptized by you, in order to obtain fellowship in your church. (I use the term *your church,* meaning the Old School Baptist, or Church of Christ.) In this case what would you do; and your reasons?

There is still another question about receiving members, and that is this: It is a well known fact that there are a great many factions among the Old School Baptists that are not numbered among the Missionary or Arminian Baptists. These

factions have split off from us on some doctrinal questions, and it has become us to withdraw our correspondence and our fellowship from them. Now, inasmuch as we have withdrawn our fellowship from them, is it order to receive their baptism? Have we done so? What say you? We are aware that many who call themselves Old School Baptists have embraced errors that we cannot fellowship, having as much fellowship for the Missionary Baptists as what we have for them. Therefore, if we receive the baptism of any so-called Baptists, with whom we do not correspond, and have fellowship, should we not receive the baptism of all that call themselves Baptists?

The next matter of inquiry is, Is not the church of Christ the highest ecclesiastical authority known on earth, and has she not a right to determine all matters in relation to membership in her body, as she in her wisdom may think just and right? Can she concede or give away this right in her compact with other churches in forming an association?

There are still other questions of grave importance that I may at some future day propound, provided the above questions are met and answered in as kind a spirit as I hope I feel in asking them. I am young in the ministry, and have not that knowledge in the management of churches, as would make me feel free in acting in these matters without the counsel of my brethren that have both age and experience, as well as the good of the cause at heart. Therefore, all that feel an interest in the peace of Zion, are requested to give information.

Dear brother, God has been pleased to visit us, and revive his work in our midst. There has been fifty-five added to the church that I belong to, and still the work is going on. Many of the churches of our association have been much refreshed.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
JAMES STRICKLAND.

Reply: The first inquiry we have answered in our reply to our friend Loveless. We do not regard it as our duty to search the hearts nor try the reins of the children of men, that is what none but God can do. But we are to be regulated in extending or withholding our church fellowship by the rule which God has given us. The reality of the regenerated state of the candidate or of the administrator is not what we are capable of judging. But whether the administrator stands connected with and sustained by the fellowship of an orderly church of Christ, we are competent to judge, and we are required to judge. Hence, in replying to the first interrogative of brother Strickland, we say, with due deference to the judgment of the church, whose servant we are, We should decline to baptize them on our faith, and prefer that they should remain unbaptized until they, for themselves, should see and feel the necessity of walking in the order which we believe to be the order of the gospel and kingdom of Christ. And our reason for this decision is the want of Bible authority for baptizing any but believers.

In reply to the second inquiry of brother Strickland, we say, If the factions which have split off from us are so far departed from the faith and order of the gospel as to be rejected from the fellowship of what we regard to be the church of Christ, then they are to us as heathen men, and as publicans, equally with the New School or Missionary Baptists, so called, which have been excluded from our fellowship, and all their religious administrations to us are equally null and void.

The third inquiry. The church of Christ is undoubtedly the highest ecclesiastical authority on earth, but she has not a particle of authority to determine any matter in relation to

her own or any other members, or anything else, only as the matter is already determined in the rule given in the New Testament. When the church, or any individual, departs from the laws of Christ, she or they act without divine authority, and their decisions are illegal and invalid. The church has no power to concede or delegate any right, or authority vested in her to any other ecclesiastical body, counsel, or association whatever.

We have candidly expressed our convictions on the questions involved in the two foregoing letters, and in doing so believe we have expressed the order and practice of the church of God generally, which order and practice appear to us to be clearly laid down for our guide in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we submit what we have written to the consideration of our brethren and to the household of faith generally.

Middletown, N. Y.
February 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 298 - 305

LETTERS OF DISMISSION

"BROTHER BEEBE: – The apostle saith, 'Be of the same mind,' &c., and we do think it very important indeed that the people of God should be well established in the truth; not only in the doctrine of the gospel in reference to the plan of redemption, but in the discipline of the church; and as a difference of opinion exists among our brethren in this part of the country on a subject which has caused some trouble, (and is not yet settled,) I thought I would request you or some of your correspondents to give their views on the same through the SIGNS; and let it be fully investigated. Should you be disposed to give your views, and they should differ from some others, then let those give theirs.

"The question is: 'When a member receives a letter of recommendation and dismission from a church, with liberty to join another church of the same faith, is he or she still accountable to the church from which they have received such letter until they are joined to another? Especially when they continue in the same place and within the bounds of the same church which gave the letter, and perhaps are guilty of immoral conduct, which is better known to the church that gave the letter than any other, and other churches are perhaps communing with such members because they have such letter, when they cannot be admitted by the church which gave the letter, and perhaps such member be a minister.'

Yours in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,
REED BURRITT."

WITH the Old School Baptists we think there can be but one opinion in regard to the matter of inquiry submitted by our brother. When a member is received by any church, he continues a member until he is regularly disconnected, which

may be by dismission in fellowship, exclusion from fellowship, or by death. If he is disconnected by dismission in fellowship, his letter is a passport from the church from which he received it to some church of the same faith and order; and such letters can only provide that when the bearer is regularly received into such a church as his letter allows him to join he is dismissed from the immediate discipline and watchful care of the church where he has formerly held his membership, but not before. A member can only be dismissed into the world by exclusion. All letters transferring members from one church to another are made to read, "when received by you – dismissed by us." Therefore, a person having obtained such a letter from his church stands in the same relation and is equally amenable to it, until he has become actually a member of another church of the same faith and order as through he had never received such a letter. No orderly brother, whether a minister or otherwise, would wish to be shielded from the wholesome discipline of the church; nor can any orderly church fail to exercise her authority in calling an erring brother to order, because he shrinks from investigation by shielding himself under his letter of dismission which cannot take effect so long as he retains it in his own hands. It is always a suspicious circumstance and calculated to injure the reputation of a brother, when he holds on to his letter beyond a reasonable time; especially if he has an opportunity to unite with a church of his order; but as in a case supposed in the query, a person guilty of departure from the order of faith of the gospel, would endeavor to prevent a fair investigation of his conduct by pleading that he is not amenable to any church, because he holds a letter, he should be required to return his letter to the church that gave it, and appear also and answer to the charges that may be against him in the church, and on his refusing to do so, he should be excluded, and if he still refuse to give up the letter, he should be published as an

excluded person, that other churches of the order be not imposed on by him.

The course of the order which we have briefly sketched, so far as our knowledge extends, is the uniform order of all our Old School Baptist churches. This rule, however, has no bearing upon churches which are not in our correspondence or fellowship. There are cases where persons become dissatisfied with churches which they believe have departed from the faith and order of the gospel, and on that account desire to withdraw their membership from such corrupt churches, as commanded of God to do; in all such cases we believe it is improper to ask for or receive letters of dismission, as the asking for a letter implies that they are satisfied with the faith and order, and only ask to be transferred to another o the same faith and order, which is not the case, and is, therefore, dishonest. If a member does not conscientiously believe that the church to which he is connected has departed from the faith and order of the gospel, he should not withdraw from it only to unit where the very same faith and order is held; and if his honest conviction is that the church is in disorder and not in the faith, he is bound by his allegiance to Christ, to protest against the disorder and heresy, and withdraw without asking for or consenting to recognize them in their disorder as an orderly church, by asking for or receive a letter. The asking for or receiving a letter is a virtual declaration of fellowship. Many have reasoned thus: "I only want a letter to show that the church has nothing against me, or to shield my character," &c. But how can it be that the church and the individual are at antipodes in faith and practice, and yet the church has nothing against him? And is this not, at least, an effort to avoid the offence of the cross? It is human policy, it is conferring with flesh and blood, it is making provision for the flesh, and it is inconsistent with the spirit of the gospel. True, we are not to court persecution; but it is equally true

we ought not to shun it when it is for righteousness' sake. If a person in good faith should become a member of a professed church of Christ, and that church should prove to be a Mormon, Mahometan, or Jewish congregation, should he ask for a letter in fellowship to join a body of the same order, would he act consistently? By no means; yet it would be no more inconsistent than in the cases supposed above. Or should a Pagan, Jew, or Turk apply for admission into a regular Old School Baptist church, and present a letter of transfer, certifying that he is a member and in full fellowship with either of these bodies, would he not be required to renounce such connection, and be received only on profession of the faith of the gospel?

New Vernon, N.Y.,
April 1, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 536 – 539

“LET THE RIGHTEOUS SMITE ME.”

THE letter of brother B. Burritt, on page 13, requires a remark or two from us. We would not willingly justify, in ourself, or in our correspondents, an improper course. If ours has been such as to lead our brethren to suppose us ambitious for the honor of being “the keenest blackguard in America,” we sincerely regret that we should have been left to act in such manner as to justify such a conclusion. Sensible we are of our inability to conduct the publication of the “Signs of the Times” in such a manner as not to betray human frailty. None of our subscribers can more sensibly feel, or more deeply regret, that weakness and pollution belongs to us; yet coming as it does from a brother, we cannot help thinking the rebuke rather severe. When we commenced our labors as publisher of this sheet, we flattered ourself we were not actuated by ambition. Had we felt ambitious, it really appeared to us there was a greater prospect for worldly applause among the popular New School Baptists than among the despised few who remained on the Lord’s side. A “bad spirit” truly must have misguided us, if our labors have only secured for us the persecution of enemies, and from our friends the unenviable distinction of “blackguard.” Well, we are glad that we have some brethren who can write under the influence of a good spirit; if such smite us it shall not break our bones; it shall be an excellent oil. If by a *letter preacher* our brother means, what the scriptures evidently do, a minister or scribe of the law, we do not know that our labors will come altogether under the classification of letter preaching; for we sometimes try to preach Christ Jesus, and him crucified; but even in this we find a stumbling-block for the Jews, and folly for the Greeks. As to a cold, lifeless manner of preaching, we are acquainted

with a few individuals who, like the editor of the "Signs of the Times," cannot pretend to so much *unction and heavenly dew* as some have boasted of in latter times. For ourself, it is only once in a while, when Jesus deigns to smile on us, that we feel all those lively and pleasant feelings which are so desirable; often we have to preach when our soul is like a wilderness, instead of being like a watered garden. Would brother Burritt have us to stop preaching on this account? As to speaking the truth in a lifeless manner, we have hitherto believed that God's words were spirit and life; sure we are that we have never given them any additional life by our speaking or preaching them; if the truth itself has no life in it for the saints, but depends on the lively frame or manner of the preacher, we have been mistaken. Nor have we ever learned how to preach the truth without giving offence. With us the offence of the cross has not yet ceased; and if we please men we are not the servant of God.

In regard to the discernment of spirits, we have been led to the conclusion referred to by our brother, that as no lie is of the truth, so the truth cometh not of a bad spirit or a devil; for our Lord has said he (the devil) was a liar from the beginning, and there is no truth in him. We have only read of one bad spirit - "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience" - this must be the devil; and sensible as we are of our imperfection, we are not willing to think we are altogether left at the mercy of his satanic influence, nor that such am unhallowed influence would betray itself by publishing truth.

It may not belong to us to defend the spirit in which some of our correspondents have written; but for ourself we will say that had we been aware that all communications published in our paper which were calculated to give offence were written in a bad spirit; or in other words, that their writers had a devil, we should have suppressed nearly all that we have

published. The letter of brother Saunders was not written without provocation; there were some unguarded expressions in it which he requested us to correct; but being unavoidably called away, when his letter went to press we failed to comply with his request.

Sorry as we should be to choose from our list of patrons one for whom we entertain so much esteem as we do for brother Burritt, yet, if he can discover in us a bad spirit, and a desire to excel in blackguardism, and feeling, as he does, scruples of conscience in supporting us, we must leave him to act according to his own judgment on the subject. As we have hitherto aimed to set forth truth and oppose error, and in doing so to bear the reproach necessarily connected with the offence of the cross, so we feel a disposition still to move onward. Meantime we wish brother Burritt and all other brethren to watch us, and in christian faithfulness correct us when they discover that we are wrong, or when they think that we are wrong.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
January 15, 1840.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
Pages 578 – 580

LIFE BOAT OF THE SHIP ZION.

A. D. Gillett, pastor of what bears the name of the Fifth Baptist church of Philadelphia, at the anniversary meeting of the Sunday School connected with his church, asserts for the encouragement of his craft that about one-half of the happy converts which he has baptized into the fellowship of that church during his labors among them, have been fruits of Sabbath Schools! and after some phrenzied displays of his ignorance of God's method of salvation, concludes in the following manner, viz:

"Parents, guardians, christians, philanthropists, all who wear the shape, and feel the spirit of humanity, I call on you, as one with you, responsible for their present ruinous condition, and ask in the name of my Redeemer, who died for these children? and for the sake of their sin-doomed but immortal souls, can you not help them from the perils that surround them, into the Sabbath School? This is the Life Boat of the ship Zion. Every man to his post and the work is done, and to the Lord Jehovah give all the praise."

We feel by no means disposed to dispute the matter with pastor Gillett, that one half of the increase of his church may have been the fruits of Sunday Schools, and the other half the fruits of anything but the fruits of grace, or the work of the Holy Ghost, as we cannot be so skeptical as to doubt that Sunday Schools and other human inventions are calculated to yield the kind of fruits which can be satisfied with his pastoral labors. But when he calls on *all who wear the shape of humanity, &c.,* with him to assume the responsibility of the present ruinous condition of those children who have never felt the redeeming and regenerating influence of Sabbath Schools, and to make an effort to help them out of their sin-doomed and perilous condition, into the Life Boat of

the ship Zion, we being of the number and *shape* called on, beg leave to decline, in the words of good old Jacob, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret, unto their assemblies; mine honor be not thou united." We would not dare assume the responsibility of any of the lost sons of Adam; but as in the case before us, we are informed that Christ has died for these children, and if so it would be insulting to his divine majesty for those of us who were unable to account to divine justice for our own guilt, and who rely alone upon the finished redemption of our Lord, to assume the responsibility of others, and in our view of the subject, it would display an awful want of confidence in the redemption of Christ for us to attempt to ferry those for whom he died to the ship Zion, inasmuch as God has taken on himself this responsibility, and has promised that the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing to Zion, (independently of Mr. Gillett's life-boat.)

But another reason why we decline having any hand in this business is, that we are very suspicious that pastor Gillett has entirely mistaken the ship! We would suggest to him that there are many privateers, and even pirates On the water, and these sometimes sail under false colors, and are often mistaken for His Majesty's ship; and what still increases our suspicion is, we know that the Zion of God has no craft bearing the name of *life Boat,* or the appearance of a Sabbath School union connected with her.

Various descriptions of boats are sometimes called life-boats; some are kept by the government on dangerous coasts to go to the relief of vessels in distress, and to preserve the livea of passengers and seaman by taking them off from the wreck of their sinking vessels. But as the Zion of God has never been in need of any such assistance, the Lord has made no such provisions, nor can we willingly engage with Mr. G. in

attempting to seduce from the ship Zion (and into such lifeboats) those who are on board.

Sometimes the fishermen's smacks are called life-boats; these have their bottoms purforated with holes to let the water into an apartment called the *well,* where the fish are put to keep them alive until they can be taken to a good market. Perhaps this is the sense in which Mr. G. uses the figure, and would provide a Sunday School for such as cannot live out their native element, (sin) and he would provide a craft which will admit of what is prohibited in Zion, that those who do not love the truth, and such as cannot endure an clement of holiness, may be preserved in their native opposition to God, until Mr. G. can get them to market, or in a situation to make some money out of them.

It is enough to shock the feelings of any but the New School, to witness with what impiety and presumption they will make use of the sacred name of Jehovah. The work must be accomplished by men. *Every man to his post and the work is done,* and then say the Lord has done it, or ascribe to the Lord the praise of what men have, will, or may do by standing at their respective posts, not as the Lord has marshalled them, but to the posts assigned them by Mr. G. and his coadjutors.

ALEXANDRIA, D. C.,
March 10, 1837.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 1
pages 362 – 364

LIVING FAITH CONTRASTED WITH THAT WHICH IS DEAD.

LIVING faith invariably proceeds from a living source, and can never emanate from the carnal mind, which is enmity against God, which is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. All men are by nature carnal, the whole fountain of the heart is corrupt, all the intellectual powers of man are corrupt, the thoughts of his heart are evil, and that continually: however we may manage the outflowings of the human mind, still the fountain and all the streams are earthly, sensual and devilish; nor can they be otherwise until the fountain be broken up, and a new heart and a new spirit be given and received. “First make the fountain pure and the stream will be pure;” “First make the tree good and the fruit will be good.” In illustration of this doctrine, we shall offer a few remarks on 1 Cor. 1. 22 and 23: “For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a Stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness The Jews were connected with Abraham only by carnal ties; they were the natural but not spiritual children of that patriarch, and the covenant which embraced them, together with all such as were bought with Abraham’s money was based on carnal provisions Their circumcision was outward, in the flesh; their worship was the observance of carnal ordnances, a worldly sanctuary, and their rewards or obedience anti punishment for transgression were temporal: the former consisted in corn, wine and oil, peace, plenty and exemption from pestilence, the land of Canaan, and national prosperity: for disobedience they experienced the reverse of these things. Their religious instructions were communicated by presenting external considerations to their natural minds anti as there is no stability in the natural mind, they required that such evidences as they could comprehend should be

often repeated. At one moment the simultaneous cry is heard from them, “All that the Lord cornmandeth us, that we will do;” at another they as unanimously demand of Aaron to “Up and make us gods to go before us; for as for this Moses, we wot not what has become of him.” These evolutions were as common among the Jews the time that Christ and the Apostles were preaching among them, as in the days of their fathers, in the wilderness or in the land which the Lord gave them. From tradition and habit they could conceive of no other faith than such as rested on signs and *moral suasion* tangible to their carnal perceptions: hence they were constantly solicitous for external signs.

When our Lord scourged out the merchants and brokers from his temple, they demanded of him a sign, seeing he executed these things; and when he reproved the greedy avarice of those who crossed the sea of Tiberias, in hope of feasting again on loaves and they said to him, What Sign shewest thou then, that we may see and believe, what doest thou work Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, as it is written, “He gave them bread from heaven.” Only the day preceding, these men were fully convinced that Christ was truly that prophet that was to come: they believed on him, and it was necessary that Christ should avoid them, as there was danger that this set of carnal believers would come and take him by force and make him king; but in less than twenty-four hours they required another sign, and as their carnal expectations were crossed they turned back and walked no more with him. This example is of itself sufficient to show how far natural faith will go, and how infinitely short of saving faith it must fall; but other examples are given in abundance. On another occasion when they had witnessed his power in casting out devils, and had blasphemously charged him with casting out devils by Beelzebub, they came to him and said, Master, we would see a sign from thee! How astonishing, when they had seen him heal the sick, give sight

to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and raise the dead, that they should still require a sign; but such is the nature of natural or dead faith, like our natural bodies, which in regard to spiritual things are dead, though they may be fed with earthly food to overflowing; yet they require to be fed again and again, because these bodies are perishable, and the food on which they are sustained is earthly, perishable food. Faith produced by moral suasion is always of this perishable kind: the devils possess it, and it makes them tremble; but it never made them love God, nor can it work by love nor purify the heart – Jesus answered them: "Au evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas:" and this sign being the same that Paul preached, as we shall presently show, was not adapted to their carnal capacity, they stumbled at it, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed. Still they required a sign! And when they had accused him before Pilate, and by perjury obtained the sentence of death against him, they continued to reiterate their demand for a sign, and proposed that if he would come down from the across to which they had nailed him, they would believe on him. The very terms on which they proposed to believe would, if acceded to by our Lord, have destroyed the foundation of the faith of God's elect, as it would have inevitably overturned the whole work of salvation by the death of Christ, and raised au insuperable barrier to Paul's preaching Christ crucified, as the sign of the prophet Jonah. But, although Jesus came not down from the cross to gratify their carnal lust for that description of testimony, yet there were such evidences given as could not fail to produce rational conviction on their minds, and such as caused them to cry out, *Surely, this was the Son of God!* They could in no other way rationally account for the darkened sun, the quaking earth, the rending rocks, the opening graves and rising dead. If it were possible that a rational conviction could ever lead to a genuine faith, we should suppose this instance

was sufficient to secure all the advantages that could result from natural conviction. But alas! how vain and unproductive of recociliation to God! No Sooner had the darkness of three hours Subsided, the dire convulsions of nature ceased to agitate their guilty senses, than they went on to procure a Roman guard to watch the sepulchre; and when they learned that he was risen from the dead they hired the guard to testify that his disciples had stolen him away while they were sleeping.

If to convince man as an intelligent being, that the scriptures are the testimony of God, and that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of his people, by presenting arguments or signs to their natural minds, were sufficient to make them true converts to the christian religion, what deficiency was there in the signs which were presented to the carnal Jews Or what superior facilities have the workmongers of this nineteenth century, for carrying home to the human mind stronger natural conviction than were produced by raising the dead, casting out devils, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, stilling the tempest, withholding the light of the sun at noon, convulsing the earth, rending the rocks, opening the graves, and causing the slumbering tenants thereof to come forth Has the natural mind of man become more susceptible to the light of truth? Are the natural prejudices of the human heart more easily overcome by reason, or do these modern *daubers with untempered mortar* really believe that they possess wisdom and Power superior to that of Jesus the Head of the church?

Among the Gentiles also there are those whose characters and condition correspond with the description given of the Jews; these also require signs, external evidence, carnal conviction, or what is more classically termed moral suasion, such as may be set home by arguments, books, tracts, excitements, enlisting selfish feelings, fame, honor,

respectability, and the hope of avoiding punishment and securing a reward. Perfectly adapted to the carnal wishes of such, is the coming and development of *that Wicked*, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming. Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteous ness in them that perish. The two-horned beast mentioned in Rev. xiii. 11, is also represented as exercising like external evidence, addressed to and taking effect on the natural powers of the human mind. "And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by means of these miracles which he bath power to do in the sight of the beast. Rev. xiii. 12-14.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

New Vernon, N. Y.,
Feb. 1, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 141 – 145

LIVING FAITH CONTRASTED WITH THAT WHICH IS DEAD.

(Concluded.)

"For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness." – l Cor. i. 22.

THE success attending the modern schemes for carrying natural conviction to the human mind, and so captivating men is accounted for by predictions going before, concerning The man of sin, the son of perdition, the dragon, the beasts and every form in which anti-christ has, does or shall hereafter appear. The wonderful boasting about *new light* reflected from seminaries, Sunday schools, tracts, anxious benches, camp or protracted meetings, and all other signs and lying wonders, sought by Jews or Gentiles, and supplied by ancient Jews or modern proselytes, is but the development of the powers of darkness, which men will choose rather than light, according to the declaration of the word of Cod. The Jews require a sign!

The Greeks seek after wisdom. The research of the ancient Greeks after knowledge is proverbial, and when appropriately directed was laudable; for all the sciences of this world are valuable in their place, but altogether inferior to and disconnected from that wisdom which cometh from above. The error of the Greeks was not simply that they sought after wisdom, but that they sought to incorporate their human wisdom with religion. And as God had made foolish the wisdom of this world, and hidden the things of his spiritual kingdom from the wise and prudent of this world, and revealed them to babes, they erred in seeking to reduce the religion of God our Savior to human science. To all those

who, like the Greeks, are seeking after worldly wisdom, the gospel of Christ in the simplicity in which it was preached by Paul, and all the primitive ministers sent forth by divine authority, the account of a crucified Savior was foolishness. They are led from human policy to seek religious knowledge from the halls of literature and colleges of science. In their estimation it is no less foolish and absurd to look for human science from the untutored savages, than for religious instruction from unlettered fisherman. What was remarkable in the opposition of Jews and Greeks to the religion of Jesus Christ, is blended in the modern popular theory of their successors in delusion to the present time. And still the words of the apostle are as applicable as when at first uttered, the Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom.

But we preach Christ crucified. The pronoun we includes all the apostles of the Lamb and true ministers of Jesus Christ. These all preach Christ crucified, which is in reality both a sign and wisdom; but not of a kind adapted to the carnal sense of Jews and Greeks. The signs which the Jews required were such as Christ told them should not be given to them, and the wisdom which the Greeks sought after was: that which God hath made foolish, and which Paul says in, connection with this text, he did not use in his speech or preaching: for Christ had told the Jews, “There shall no sign be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonah.” The preaching of Christ crucified is the sign of the prophet Jonah: “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, even so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” The sign of Jonah was an emblem of Christ in the heart of the earth, of Christ crucified, &c.; hence to preach Christ crucified, is to set forth that sign of which our Lord spake, and the only one that God will give. This sign not only sets forth the descent of our Redeemer into the dark dominions of death, through his crucifixion,

loaded with the transgressions of all his chosen people, for whose offences he was delivered up; but his triumphant resurrection, at the time signified in the sign, for the justification of all for whom he was delivered up. Three days and three nights show also the extent of time that his mystical body or any part of it should be held in that death from which Christ is engaged to raise them up and cause them to sit together in the heavenly places; for iii the fullness of the dispensations of time, which are three, counting from Adam to Moses, from Moses until the coming of Messiah, and thence to the end of time. As at the expiration of three days and nights, the perfect body of Jesus left the environs of the king of terrors, so at the end of time he shall deliver up to his Father the fullness of his mystical body. This sign, whether considered in reference to that body which died on Calvary, or the church which is his body and the full ness of him that filleth all in all, is embraced in the preaching of Christ crucified. And as the sign is of a spiritual nature, the Jews, who look for salvation by works, and for a foundation of their faith in external or natural signs, adapted to their carnal sense, stumble at it; for it is to them a stumbling block. They stumble at the word, as Peter has said, being disobedient, whereunto they were appointed. If therefore it were possible by any course of preparatory study or labor, to present the subject of Christ crucified in such a light as to enable the Jews to understand it, and so prevent them from stumbling at it, it would cease to be the gospel of Christ. It would fail to be the anti-type of Jonah, and it would involve what Paul studiously avoided, viz: that the faith of God’s people should stand in the wisdom of men but not in the power of God. Is the preaching of Christ crucified in this day a stumbling block to boasting arminians, and legal work-mongers, so that they can neither understand nor love it? So it was when preached by Paul, and in all cases where the doctors of divinity, as they are called, manage to present a system or theory of religion which can be taught in seminaries, colleges, Sabbath or

other schools, by tracts, catechisms, arguments, moral suasion, or by any other means of human device, they present a gospel which Paul did not preach, which is another gospel, and those who have devised it and all who preach it are accursed; for if Paul, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than that which was preached in the primitive church by the apostles, “let him be accursed.”

We need not labor to prove that religious doctrines are in vented and taught by men in the present age, so widely differing from the gospel preached by Paul, that instead of avoiding, as he did, the excellency of speech which man’s wisdom teaches, those who are engaged in promulgating such doctrines, use enticing, or persuasive, words, the consequence of which is, that their converts’ faith stands not in the power of God, but in the wisdom of men. This spurious sort of preaching is not unproductive of faith; for unregenerate sinners are capable of believing such systems, and it is taught to unregenerate children and adults in schools, as worldly sciences are taught, and they can and do learn it upon the .same principle and with as great facility as they can learn grammar, mathematics or mechanical operations, and ten converts are made to such delusions, where one is made by grace to the faith of the gospel of Christ. The faith there fore of a majority of modern converts, being destitute of spiritual life, is dead faith.

To the worldly wise, who have confidence in their superiority of knowledge and talents, the gospel of the blessed Redeemer is foolishness. The Grecian philosophers could but regard the doctrine of salvation through the blood and righteousness of one that was crucified, with contempt. They regarded the doctrine preached by Paul as an imposition, a delusive infatuation. And to this very day, all who understand the christian religion to be a science, capable of being taught in schools, and comprehended by human intellect, without

the special quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, do regard the real gospel of Christ, when preached in its primitive simplicity and purity, as foolishness.

To all those who possess dead faith, however orthodox that faith may be, the preaching of Christ crucified is a stumbling block and foolishness. Hence the mighty efforts which are made by work-mongers to remove the stumbling block, and the offence of the cross of Christ, and the cunning craftiness of the wise and prudent of this world, to invent and practice upon some principle which they regard as an improvement upon the gospel as preached by the apostle Paul.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
March 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 243 – 247

LOCAL DIFFICULTIES

Local difficulties in churches, or among brethren, should, as far as possible, be confined to their own localities. Publishing them abroad, and especially to the world, can be of no avail to the parties involved; but such injudicious publication will certainly inflict a severe trial on brethren abroad, and bring unnecessary reproach on the cause of truth and righteousness. When brethren become aggrieved with brethren, the gospel points out the course to be pursued, and if we adhere strictly to the order dictated by the Head of the church, however much we may have to suffer for the present, we shall however enjoy the approving smiles of our heavenly Father. Any step which we may take to expose an erring brother, however aggravating the circumstances seem to us, will have the effect to make us appear in the wrong, in the eyes of those who are disinterested in the immediate cause of the difficulty. Meekness and humility becomes those who profess to be the followers of the lowly Lamb of God. After having labored faithfully, and in the spirit of the gospel, to reclaim an erring brother, if unsuccessful, we are to take the next step in the order of discipline. In all this labor the grand object should not be so much to set ourselves in an approved position, as to gain our brother or sister who have erred. If we feel a consciousness that in the whole matter we have been blameless, we should ascribe it all to the restraining grace of God; and consider ourselves, lest we also be tempted. When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died. Nothing is better calculated to secure the esteem and fellowship of the children of God, than a spirit of meekness, patience and long-suffering. Nor can we in any other course so much conform to the example and precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ. We should not suffer sin to rest on a fellow-member of the kingdom. We are to watch over them for their

good, and when we have admonished them in love, and with a prayerful desire to reclaim them, when every previous effort warranted by the laws of Christ has failed, then are we to tell it to the church, and there submit the matter. The church, if in gospel order, will make a righteous decision, and to that decision we should quietly submit. It does not become us in any stage of the difficulty, or investigation of it, to spread the matter abroad, or act as though we desired to let everybody know how badly our brother, or brethren, as the case may be, have acted. “Tell it not in Gath. Publish it not in Askelon,” for that would only cause the uncircumcised to triumph and rejoice.

We have now on our table several communications written for publication in the SIGNS, setting forth matter of local difficulties. Some from a distance of more than a thousand miles from this place, others from regions not so remote, but all complaining of troubles which cannot be mitigated by any such publications. Why then should the hearts of God’s dear children be made sad in every part of our widely spread country by such publications? The more public we make our difficulties, the more difficult it will be to reconcile them. An offending brother will not be more easily reclaimed by our letting all the world know how bad he is.

Churches, as well as individuals, may sometimes be at fault, in regard to their treatment of members who have offended. The church, no more than individual members, has a right to depart from the divine rule. We are, and have long been, a stickler for the independence of churches. We hold that a gospel church is the highest court under heaven, and that no orderly member can disrespect her authority. But, as before remarked, even the church has no right to do wrong. Her independence does not make her infallible, nor give her the right to depart from the letter or spirit of the gospel, in faith or practice. If therefore any church shall transcend her

authority in administering the discipline of the gospel, by departing from the rule of discipline which Christ has given, she makes herself a transgressor, and her sister churches are not, in such a case, to regard such administration valid. The churches are, as branches of the common kingdom of our Lord, not vested with authority to administer any other than the laws of her King. When she acts in her true sphere, and administers the laws of Christ, no other church or council has a right to question her authority, or to attempt to make void her decisions.

But to return to the particular subject on which we commenced this article. We are receiving correspondence continually, from every state and territory of our great Republic, and even from other countries, and should we open our columns for the publication of local difficulties of brethren, churches, or even associations, the grand object of our paper would be defeated. It cannot be expected that we, at so great a distance from the places where the difficulty exists, can be competent to judge of the merits of the cases, on *exparte* testimony. If the brethren or churches involved, desire counsel, it is better for them to call on brethren or churches nearer by, who can counsel them advisedly, having a better knowledge of all the circumstances of the cases in which their counsel is required. Thus proceeding we avoid the making of our local difficulty the subject of general grief to all the saints scattered abroad, who, as a general thing, have trials enough of their own to sufficiently weigh them down.

Another reason that we may urge for declining to publish such difficulties is, that the course would involve endless controversies in our paper. An aggrieved party relates its complaint in the SIGNS, the other party then claims, as matter of course, a right to make a defense, and there is no knowing when or where the matter will end.

We believe the Old School Baptists are the most orderly people on earth, and that there is as little cause for complaint among them, as among any people in this vale of tears; but still we have found that “offenses will come among them.” Let us not publish our distresses to the world; the world has no sympathy for the children of God, but let us strive together for the things whereby one may edify another, and let us ask counsel of God, who giveth liberally unto all men, and upbraideth not. While feeling aggrieved with others, let us see to it that we are not occasioning grief to those whom we love in the Lord. Finally, brethren, be of one mind, love as brethren, keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, and may our God bruise Satan under our feet shortly, Amen.

Middletown, N. Y.
Nov. 1, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 142 - 145

LOVE.

“My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” – 1 John iii. 18.

None of the divinely inspired writers of the holy scriptures had dwelt so much upon the subject of love as this beloved disciple of apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ, and perhaps none had more fully experienced and exemplified its power and excellency than he had; yet all the apostles whose writings have been given to us fully agree with him and exhorting the saints to “let brotherly love continue,” and that it be without dissimulation, and have spoken of its origin, its power, and of its effects in keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Although the law which was given to Israel commanded those to whom it was given to love their neighbor as themselves, yet the command of Christ to his disciples to love one another is a new commandment; for it is not to be observed in the old miss of the latter, as a duty only, or legal obligation, but in the newness of the spirit, as the law of Christ, the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, by which they are made free from a law of sin and death. The love of God, which is shed abroad in the heart of all who are born from above, is far superior to that passion of our earthly nature which is called love. That love is natural, and consequently imperfect; but this of which our apostle speaks is spiritual. The one is of the earth, earthy, and is common, as an element of our nature, to man, a passion, and to brutes as an instinct. It differs widely in its nature and origin from the natural passion of our earthly nature, for the apostles speak of as being born of God, not of the flesh. “Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that love of th is born of God, and knoweth God.”

"God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God." – 1 John iii. 7, 16. It is not an improvement of the carnal passion of our fleshly nature, but a special gift of God, and a fruit of his spirit. In the commencement of the chapter to which we have referred we are called to "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." It differs in manner, as well as in nature and quality, from all other love, and transcends all earthly love as heaven is higher than the earth. This transcendently high and holy love which God has bestowed upon his people, and by which they know that they have passed from death unto life, and by the manifestation of which one to another all men shall know that we are the disciples of the loving Savior, who has loved us in giving himself for us, is the love wherewith God, who is rich in mercy, hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, and by its existence in our hearts we are distinguished from all others of mankind. The beloved apostle, in verse eleven, very justly infers, "If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." And as another apostle says, "Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto on feigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently; been born again," &c. – 1 Peter i. 22, 23.

But we designed to speak more particularly in regard to the manner in which this fraternal of should not, and in what manner it should, be cherished and manifested by those whom John recognizes as his "little children." This admonition and instruction is not addressed to aliens, or to any outside of the family in household of God; but to children born of the same heavenly parentage, whose Father is God in Christ, and his mother is Jerusalem which is above, which is free, and which is the mother of all who are, as Isaac was, the children of the free woman. – Gal. iv. 26, 28. Not to great children who fill able to care for themselves, and need not the admonition; but little children, humbled under the mighty

hand of God, too small to be self-reliant or to feel independent; those who feel their weakness, and need to be taken by the hand and led step by step. Larger children may feel able to venture more; but these “new-born babes,” who desire the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby, and appreciate the privilege of the counsels and instructions, admonitions and exhortations of those who were called in qualified of God to be as nursing fathers in the family and household of God. To all such little children the admonition of our text comes, first in his native form, instructing them how they should not love: “not in word, neither in town.” But what can the apostle mean? Happy indeed is that little child in the kingdom of Christ, or that child of God of more mature age and experience, that has never been betrayed by the device of Satan to love in word or in town. Examples are given in the connection immediately preceding our text: “Whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother had need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth a profit?” – James ii. 15, 16. This describe the case of loving in word, and a very cheap way of loving in town, but fails to shall hold dwelleth the love of God in him who is sown liberal of his good wishes that the poor and needy sufferer may be warmed and filled, but not at his expense. There is undoubtedly too much of this heartless but wordy show of love and benevolence among professors of religion at this day, and even among some of the saints of God.

To profess a love for the people of God, for his institutions, his truth and his government, when the power in spirit of that love is not felt drawing us with its silken cords to an act of obedience to the law of Christ, is but a hypocritical

dissimulation, which is forbidden; it may sound well upon the towns of dissemblers, but are reaches not down into the heart. But as the admonition of our text is addressed to those who are recognized by the apostle as little children, as new-born babes, who had tasted that the Lord is gracious, may we not infer that even the saints of god may to some extent be tempted to dissimulate and their professions of christian love, or at least fell to manifest the love which really exists in their hearts in acts of brotherly kindness and christian faithfulness one to another? It really seems that if no such liability existed, the apostles would not so earnestly exhort the saints to let brotherly love continue; it cannot continue where it has not begun, nor were it does not already exist. But where it does really exist, it is not enough that we declare its existence in word or in tongue; there is a more scriptural and practical way to demonstrate its existence, its nature, its heavenly origin and divine excellence than mere words and fruitless profession.

When we consider the importance of the indwelling of the love of God in our hearts, not only in its uniting, cementing and heavenly power to bring the saints in sweet and joyful bonds of fellowship, and of its tendency to glorify God, and as the indispensable ground of all our acts of obedience to the laws of Christ, but also as the most grip shall and reliable evidence that we have passed from death unto life, its vital importance can not be overrated. And the manner of its demonstration will up here in a clear enforceable light when we are referred to the example to which the holy apostles have with one voice directed our attention. We are told not only that Christ loved the church, but that he actually gave himself for it. And this is given as an example to the saints; for as Christ has loved and laid down his life for the church, “even so ought we to lay down our lives for one another.” The love of Christ was in deed and in truth. God our Savior has commanded his love to us, not alone by loving, but in the

active manner in which its power was demonstrated in due time, when Christ died for us.

Our professions of love may be expressed in words and utterances of the tongue, which do not reach down into the heart, which move not the bowels of compassion, inclining us to deeds of benevolence and brotherly kindness. Such sounding professions are what the apostle calls loving in word and in town; but such demonstrations are fruitless when unaccompanied by deeds of active kindness, as shown by the apostles in the verse preceding our text. What does it profit our needy, suffering brother if we tell him to be warmed in filled, and lavish on him our good wishes, if we shut up the bowels of compassion and fail to relieve his suffering to the extent of our ability? The Godlike example is presented in the context (verse 16): “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” If God’s love to us had been only in word or in tongue, unaccompanied by deeds of mercy and grace, we must have perished in our sins. If the same love of God which was commanded to us in the wonderful sufferings of the Savior for our salvation is shed abroad in our hearts, surely it will be this to suffer, and if we need be, to die, for our brethren. We will not only take joyfully the spoiling of our goods to minister comfort to our destitute and suffering brethren, but we will cheerfully brave even the terrors of death and the grave, if called to do so, for the good of the cause and people of our God.

Let us call attention a little further to the distinction between loving in word and tongue, and that love which is indeed an in truth. May we not with word and tongue profess to love our brethren, and even when they do not need to share with us our worldly treasure, fail to show our love and faithfully watching over them, telling them their faults, and laboring to reclaim them? If instead of telling our brethren their faults

and meekness and love, we publish them to others, calling the attention of others to their failings, although we may profess to love them, and to be grieved that they have erred, yet such love is rather in word and tongue than in deed and in truth. A profession of love to God, to his truth and to his people maybe expressed by word with a tongue, as in the case of Joab to Amasa, "Art thou in health, my brother?" (2 Sam. xx. 9) while the instruments of cruelty and death are concealed. And David complained of one whose words were smoother than butter, while war was in his heart; and his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords." – Psa. lv. 21.

When we profess our love for the assembling of the saints for the social worship of God and comfort and edification of the saints, and solemnly covenant that we will not for sake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, and solemnly addressed to God our songs, in the words of the poet,

"Might I enjoyed the meanest place
Within thy courts, O God of grace,
Not tents of ease, nor thrones of power,
Should tempt our feet to leave thy door."

and then allow things of much smaller magnitude to prevent us from attending the meetings of the church, where is then the blessedness we once spake in sang of? Our love for the house of prayer should be in deed and in truth, if we adhere to the admonition of our text. How frequently have some of the saints brought sorrow and barrenness of mind upon themselves by selling their birthright privileges in the church for some momentary carnal gratification. In word and tongue they say they prefer Jerusalem above their chief joy; but in deeds they shall a lamentable preference for the allurements of time and sense.

Again, there are other expenses to be provided for, besides that of ministering to the poor, which demand of us faithful stewards of our temporal things, as those who believe that all things belong to the lord, and that he required of us that according as he hath prospered us in putting us in trust, that we should communicate to whenever is needed to sustain the order of his house, and hold ourselves accountable to him, whose we are, and whom we profess to serve. The nature of our love to him, to his people into his cause is tested by our faithfulness or delinquency in giving or withholding. "The liberal deviseth liberal things; and by liberal things shall he stand." – Isa. xxxii. 8. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that witholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." – Proverbs xi. 24, 25. All our worldly possessions should lie at the apostles' feet, to be used or disposed of as God by his inspired apostles has commanded. The terrible judgment which fell on Ananias and Saphira for dissembling and lying to the Holy Ghost in this matter, should be a warning to all whose covetousness would lead them in a like manner to dissemble. Can we who profess to know the love of God sing to the Lord the following stanzas,

"All that I am and all I have
Shall be forever thine;
All that my duty bids me give,
My cheerful hands resign.

"Yet if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my God with zeal so great
That I would give him all,"

and at the same time refuse to bear an equitable share of the expenses which are required in providing a suitable place to

meet for the worship of God, or to support his ministers, whose time and labor are devoted to the feeding of the flock of God, which he has purchased with his own blood? Can we do this, and not lie to the Holy Ghost? We solemnly say we would give him all that we have and all we are, when a very small part of what he has made us stewards of is either withheld or grudgingly given. On this very subject an apostle reminds us that "God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap." How vain are loud professions of love to God, to his people, to the ministry which he has raised up, if our love is only in word or in tongue. If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. – 2 Cor. viii. 12.

Where little is given, but little will be required; and where much is given, and held in trust by the stewards, more will be required. It is too frequently the case, so far as our observation extends, that those who are the least able bear more than their just proportion of the burden of supplying the necessary expenses of our churches. We do not mean to exempt the ministers from a just share of responsibility; for they are men of like passions with others, and may, from an undue anxiety to serve their own avarice, run greedily after the error of Balaam, and make merchandise of their sacred calling, by watching more vigilantly to find out and occupy the most lucrative places, rather than watch the hand that points out the places where their labors are more needed. Nor do we call attention to this subject on our own account, for our course is nearly finished; and in more than sixty years in the ministry our lines have fallen to us in comparatively pleasant places, and our lot has been cast among faithful and kind brethren, whose love generally has been in *deed* and in *truth*. At our advanced age we feel a good degree of assurance that our brethren will bear with us, when for the sake of those we soon shall leave behind us, both ministers and brethren, and for the general prosperity

of the church of Christ, we call attention to this important but exceedingly delicate subject. Covetousness, whether in the church or in the ministry, *is idolatry*, and is classified with the most reprehensible abominations. It is a sly fox that spoils the vines, and often gets a strong hold of us before we are aware that we are at all under its pernicious influence, or in any degree controlled by it.

Let us carefully review the admonition, as presented by the apostle in its legitimate connection. In verse 14 of this chapter, our knowledge that we have passed from death unto life rests upon the existence of this love in our hearts, which is not in word and tongue, but in deed and in truth; for he that loveth not his brother abideth in death. In verse 15 we are informed how the love of God is perceived, in distinction from that profession of love which is only in word and in tongue. It is clearly perceptible in this, that the love of God in Christ Jesus was demonstrated as the pure love of God in his laying down his life for us; and we, if that same love of God dwells in us, will be by it ready to lay down our life for the brethren. Hence, in verse 17, he demands how this love of God, which can be perceived in no other way than by sacrificing even life, if need be, for the brethren, can dwell in him who, having this world's good, will shut up the bowels of compassion from his brother who is in need of substantial aid. And in verse 19 he shows that "Hereby," that is, by loving in deed and in truth, and shall assure our hearts before him," that is, before God.

What greater desire can any child of God have than that he may assure his heart before God that he knows the truth, and that in deed and in truth the love of God dwells in him, giving infallible evidence that he is born of God?

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 49, No. 6
March 15, 1881

LUKE 7:35

“But wisdom is justified of all her children (Luke 7:35).”

At the request of an esteemed brother, we propose to give some general views on the subject of wisdom; and the apostle James informs us that there are two kinds which are essentially different from each other, emanated from opposite sources, and productive of very different fruits, each known by its peculiar qualities and general characteristics. That which is most popular in the world, and which is called the wisdom of this world, we are told, “descendeth not from above; but is earthly, sensual, devilish;” its tendency is to confusion and every evil work (see James 3:13-16). It was found in the serpent that beguiled Eve in the morning of the creation and has its fountain in the depths of hell. By this kind of wisdom, the world knew not God. None of the princes, or ruling powers of this world, knew Christ; for if they had known him they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. This wisdom is so cheap that all may have it; it is so easily acquired that no divine or spiritual power is required for the attainment of it. Our mother Eve received it, unasked from the serpent in the garden, and it is now being insidiously instilled into the natural minds of children and adults from all the humanly devised religious institutions of the world, from the Infant School to the more imposing Theological Seminaries in the land, and almost every school is more or less infested with it. It being of the world, the world approves and loves it. It qualifies the carnal mind of men to contest and resist the truth of God with more subtlety, and craft, and to control the natural mind with the greater plausibility.

It is set forth allegorically in the seventh chapter of Proverbs, as used by the *strange woman,* (anti-christ) in her seductive

and adulterous wiles, and missionary arts by which she makes proselytes of those who are void of true wisdom. Allured by her deceptive flattery and crafty words, her converts "go after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool goeth to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life."

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy (James 3:17)." This wisdom which is from above, is the wisdom of God, and it is therefore pure: free from all impurity or deception, and possessed of eternal excellency in itself. It is peaceable in its fruits; inspiring good will to men, and glory to God in the highest; all who are richly endowed with it will beat their swords into plough shears, and their spears into pruning hooks; and the nation ruled by it will learn war no more. It is gentle in its nature and in all its effects; easy to be entreated. "If any of you (of the scattered people of God to whom this epistle was addressed) lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him (James 1:5)." How gentle, and how easily entreated by all who have faith in God! It is full of good fruits, leaving no room for partiality or hypocrisy. This wisdom, let it be remembered, can only come from above; God alone can make us wise unto salvation.

This heavenly wisdom is personified in Proverbs 8; and indeed the whole book of Proverbs is addressed by Wisdom to her children. This should be carefully observed that we may better understand their proper import. Some of the proverbs have been read and so constructed as to make the false impression that they are addressed by God himself to men; or that our Lord Jesus Christ is personified by Wisdom, and in that character he speaks in the proverbs to the sons of

men generally; saying, for instance, “I love them that love me, and they that seek me early shall find me.” Now God has no where in the scriptures made any such propositions to men. God does not love men in return for their love to him; nor does he propose to do so, for his people and all who ever have or ever shall love God, love him because he has first loved them. Our love is subsequent to his, and his first love is invariably the cause of our love to him. When he has shed abroad his love in us, but not before, then we love him as a consequence. But when Wisdom doth cry, and understanding puts forth her voice, she crieth at the gates, at the entrance, at the coming in, at the doors. That is, at the portals of the house which she has builded. None can enter her gates and be admitted to participate with her children in the banquet of Wisdom until they are called by grace, quickened by the Holy Spirit and made partakers of that fear of the Lord which God has graciously promised to put in the hearts of his people. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” This beginning of wisdom is the gate of her house, the entry of her city, and the coming in of her doors. Here at her portals Wisdom is found; and here her voice is put forth to all who possessing the fear of the Lord approach her dwelling. Unto all such she calls, and her voice is to the sons of men; and thus she speaks to them. “O ye simple, understand wisdom: and ye fools, be of an understanding heart.” All who approach her gates are of this character.

The fear of the Lord has made them conscious of their simplicity, and aware of their folly. “If any man would be wise let him first become a fool, that he may be wise.” In the early experience of every saints, he is made to see, feel and confess that all his wisdom is foolishness, and all his righteousness but filthy rags. All his schemes and plans which he thought were so wisely laid for attaining life have failed, all his former calculations are laid low; and in the fear of the Lord he will acknowledge that he is the very character

addressed by Wisdom. Blessed now of the Lord with a knowledge of his folly, and of his need of understanding, he watcheth daily at Wisdom's gates, and waits at the posts of her doors, for that wisdom which descendeth from above, which wisdom dwells with prudence, and finds out knowledge of witty inventions.

Unwilling now to depart from the avenues of true wisdom, though he feels that he is very slow to learn, yet having no where else to look, he waits at the posts of her doors. "For whoso findeth wisdom findeth life and shall obtain favor of the Lord." As he listens to her voice, she speaks to him of excellent things; and the opening of her lips, in the disclosure of her treasures, points out to him the way of understanding; she discriminates understandingly between right and wrong, truth and error, good and evil; she directs only to right things. The mouth of true wisdom always speaks truth; as error is unwise; wisdom rejects it, and wickedness being unwise, is an admonition to the lips of Wisdom. As she cries and lifts up her voice to the pupil who is entering her gates, he finds that all the words of her mouth are in righteousness, and that there is nothing froward or perverse in them. True wisdom which comes from above never misleads, deceives or fails to give unerring counsel. All her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. And they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge.

All the children of Zion are taught of God, and therefore they have understanding, and knowledge of the truth, and can understand the instructions of that wisdom which is an attribute of God himself. But none can understand the words of wisdom until they are quickened and taught of God. The preaching of the gospel of Christ crucified is to the work-mongrel Jew or legalist a stumblingblock, and to the learned Greek, foolishness; but to them that are called it is the wisdom and the power of God.

To the disciple in the school of Christ, Wisdom says, Receive my instruction and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it. Silver and gold are among the most precious treasures of this world; the carnal mind makes them an idol, and they constitute the mammon of this world. The love of this specious idol is the root of all evil. The rich fool whose golden treasures were increased, could take no part of them with him on the night in which his soul was required of him. But the revenue of Wisdom are durable riches of righteousness. The children of Wisdom should never diverge from the counsels of wisdom for all the glittering bates this world can present. Wisdom from on high proclaims her dwelling, association, and her business, saying, “I, Wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.” Some have supposed these words were spoken by Christ, personified by Wisdom; but it will be seen in all this connection Wisdom assumes the feminine gender, which is no where in the scriptures applied to Christ.

It is to us a most glorious truth, Wisdom as an attribute of the eternal God, with every other perfection of the deity is embodied in Christ, and that Christ is of God made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption; and that in him are hidden all the treasures of Wisdom and knowledge. But no one perfection severed from its connection with all the other perfections of the Godhead is sufficient to express all the fullness of the Godhead that dwells in him bodily. Besides, we think the misapplication of this perfection as a personal identification of Christ has a tendency to mystify some of the words of wisdom, and make them seem to conflict with the general doctrine of the Bible. Some have supposed that the strong language used of Wisdom in this eighth chapter of Proverbs are required to prove the divinity, or eternity of Christ. To such a supposition

we cannot consent; for John 1:1 is much more conclusive and to the point. The Word was with God, and the Word was God; this is irrefutable testimony of his Eternal Godhead. And there are many other passages, equally strong and conclusive.

When we attempt to prove a position by passages which are inapplicable to the subject we weaken rather than strengthen our argument. We feel certain that if the inspired writer had designed to personify Christ, in this chapter, he would not have used pronouns of the feminine gender; as where he says, "Doth not Wisdom cry and Understanding put forth *her*voice? *She* hath hewn out *her* seven pillars. *She* hath killed *her* beasts, *she* hath mingled *her* wine, *she* hath furnished *her*table, *she* hath sent forth *her* maidens, *she* crieth upon the high places of the city," etc. Can any scripture be found wherein the feminine gender is applied personally to Christ, or to God?

Again some have thought that what is written in this chapter must apply to Christ; as proving what is called his pre-existence; that he was with the Father, from everlasting, etc. We do not need thus to construe the chapter for any such purpose, as we have abundant direct testimony to prove not only that he was with God before the worlds began, but also, that he was absolutely God.

Let us read the testimony as applicable to Wisdom, as a perfection or attribute of God, and it must also stand confessed that the wisdom as well as every other attribute of his Godhead was with him, or ever the earth was, and from everlasting. Can we conceive a period either in time or eternity when God was without Wisdom, or when Wisdom was not with him? In these inspired scriptures, the exalted character of divine Wisdom is very clearly and most beautifully demonstrated. Remember that it is Wisdom that

makes the proclamations. “I Wisdom dwell with prudence.” “Counsel is mine and sound wisdom, I am understanding, I have strength.” “By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.” This last passage is relied upon by some to prove a divine right by which many of the most despotic kings and wicked and profligate governments are sustained. Compare this text with Psalm 2:10-12. “Be *wise* now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish by the way.” How many foolish kings have been deposed in ancient and modern times for their folly in their mad rejection of the counsels of wisdom. How many human governments have perished for their folly. Wisdom directs that human rulers shall kiss, or be at peace with the Son of God who is invested with power above them as King of kings, and Lord of lords. “He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” It is extreme folly and madness for kings and rulers of the earth to ignore his government, and dare to oppress his saints; to command them to do what Christ has forbidden, or fail to do what he has commanded. “Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm; for he that toucheth them touches the apple of his eye.” It is not by Christ’s Mediatorial power or command that the kings of this world reign; for he says, “My kingdom is not of this world.” But it is by wisdom they reign. A fool may be a king nominally for a time, but he does not really reign; his ministers do that for him; and soon his dominion ceases.

Wisdom further proclaims, “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.” Is this a proclamation from Christ to the children of men? How very differently it sounds from what he said in John 7:34, “Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me.” But how harmonious with the whole of the divine testimony when understood as a

proclamation of Wisdom to her children. Those who, as soon as they are born of the Spirit (for that is as early as any seek this wisdom which cometh from above) seek the counsel of wisdom; and stand waiting at the posts of her door for a supply, shall assuredly find it: and such are the peculiar favorites of Wisdom. Can any dispute that riches and honor are with Wisdom, even durable riches and righteousness? Well may she declare, “My fruit (the fruit of wisdom) is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver.” Those who are void of understanding are led by folly, like fools to the correction of the stocks. But Wisdom says, I lead in the way of righteousness; in the midst of the paths of judgment; that I may cause them that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures.”

The highest possible commendation of the wisdom set forth in this chapter is found in the testimony that God possessed it in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. It is the wisdom which God displayed when his hand garnished the skies, and laid the foundation of the earth. This wisdom shines in all his works of creation, providence and grace. In the contemplation of this profound wisdom the inspired apostle exclaimed, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again (Romans 4:33-35).&rdquo Wisdom claims association and companionship with God from everlasting. “I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.” However justly and truly this language may be applicable to the Son of God, as set up in his Mediatorial relation to his church, we cannot, for reasons already given, understand it as in this connection spoken of him personally. The truth that God possessed this Wisdom before his works of old is abundantly apparent in the

perfections of all his works; for in the absence of it, how could his wonderful works have been so perfectly wrought? He had not to experiment, and try a variety of experiments in order to gain a knowledge, or to perfect his wisdom; for if he were less wise before his works of old than now, how could we rely upon his immutability, or any of his eternal attributes? “He is of one mind and none can turn him.” He is the Lord, he changes not; therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Wisdom may well claim her priority to all the works of God, and in the sublime language of this chapter declare, “When there were no depths, I was brought forth; [or as pre-existing in God himself called into requisition.] When there were no fountains abounding with water; before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depths: when he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains of the deep: when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment; when he appointed the foundations of the earth: Then was I by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men (Proverbs 8:24-31).”

Now all this is declared in commendation of the wisdom of God, and in all the particulars named, these declarations are sustained and demonstrated. And in conclusion, the children of Wisdom, by whom she is justified, are appealed to from these considerations; to listen to her voice, to discard folly, and cordially embrace her.

Now therefore (or in consideration of all this) hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. The plain import of this strong appeal of Wisdom to her children is that they should attend at her gates, wait at the posts of her doors; hear her instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not; for she saith, "Blessed is the man that heareth me; watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that smnneth against me, wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death."

How peculiarly appropriate are all the illustrations of the wisdom which God has displayed in all his works and ways, and how important that all who would live godly in Christ Jesus should hearken to all her admonitions, receive all her instructions, conform to all her rules, obey all her precepts, and walk in all her paths. How blessed are the children of wisdom, trained under her tuition, and endowed with her revenue. All who possess this wisdom are wise unto salvation, and find life; but all who hate her and love folly, reject her counsels and heed not her admonitions love death. Allured, ensnared and betrayed by that wisdom which is from beneath, and which is the opposite of that which is from above, those who despise her maxims shall be involved in the direful consequences of their folly, and then Wisdom shall laugh at their calamities and mock when their fear cometh. Alas! how true are the words:

"Broad is the road that leads to death,
And thousands walk together there;
But Wisdom shows a narrow path,
With here and there a traveler."

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 464 - 472

LUKE X. 31.

"BROTHER BEEBE: – What do you think of Luke x., and first clause of 31st verse? As Old School Baptists, we profess to believe that nothing transpires on earth or in heaven, that is not under the direct supervision of Him who created all things; and yet, here is a declaration of the Savior, that, "By chance there came down a certain priest that way," &c.

Yours, A. RICHARDSON.
Holland Pattent, N. Y., March 10, 1844."

WE discover nothing in this passage which, by a scriptural construction of our Lord's words, can be made to bear against the doctrine held by all consistent Old School Baptists, viz: That God, our Creator, holds an unlimited government and providential control over every creature and all events, in the very nature of things we are compelled to believe, and that nothing can be so far in the distance as to escape the eye of Omniscience, consequently nothing can be by chance with God. But things may, and do happen to us by *chance*, for our thoughts are not as God's thoughts. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so fr the thoughts and ways of God transcend those of us. Things by us unthought of, unlooked for, frequently transpire, and yet, nothing can transpire of which God had not a perfect knowledge from everlasting. "I return, says the wise man, "and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but TIME AND CHANCE HAPPENETH TO THEM ALL. For man also knoweth not his time; as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." – Eccl. ix. 11 & 12. The case of the man who fell

among thieves, as mentioned by our Lord in the passage referred to by brother Richardson, is an exemplification of the words quoted above, that time and chance happeneth to all men. The man that went down to Jericho could not have forseen the evil that was to befall him on the way. Like fishes that are taken in the net, and like birds caught in the snare, he was taken and snared; his speed at running, his strength in fighting, his wisdom, riches, understanding, and skill, could not prevent the catastrophe, which, in the providence of God, awaited him. If fishes could forsee their exposure to the net, they could easily avoid it; and, if men possessed knowledge and wisdom like that of God, they would never go in the way of danger; but this they do not possess, and consequently they are subject to surprise and disappointment by what to them is *time and chance*. But who is prepared to believe that, because the man that went from Jerusalem to Jericho, did not know that there were thieves to be encountered, that God did not know that those thieves were there, and what they would do? If this was all chance with God, as it certainly was with the man, and with the priest, then where is the obligation of gratitude on the part of the wounded man to God, for sending the good Samaritan that way at that time, and for touching his heart with pity, and providing him with all that was necessary to administer to the afflicted and wounded man?

The priest came that way by chance, i. e. not having any design to be there at that particular moment; probably would rather have passed by at a time when there was nothing to demonstrate his unfeeling heart. His passing by was also unlooked for by the man that was half dead; he had no means of knowing beforehand that the priest was to pass that way at that time ; but, how evident it must be to all who know the Lord, that God, who declareth the end from the beginning, knew all about it; and had designed all these circumstances, to show the wretched depravity of the Jewish

priesthood, to admonish the children of his spiritual Jerusalem that they cannot go down from thence to Jericho with safety, and show that salvation is not of the Jewish priest or Levite, but of God that showeth mercy.

In all the vicissitudes of life, we find enough to impress our minds with the infinite disparity between God and men. At once, before his eye, all things which to us are past, present, or to come, stand present. In one comprehensive glance he surveys all things in heaven, earth, and hell, from everlasting to everlasting.

"Eternity, with all its years,
Stands present to his view;
With him there's nothing old appears,
With God, there's nothing new."

The flight of angels and of sparrows are alike under his immediate supervision; the direction of a thunderbolt and the falling of a hair from our heads, the bursting of a bubble and the crash of worlds, are equally dependent on his decrees; the pillars of heaven tremble and are astonished at his reproof . He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding he smiteth through the proud: by his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him; but the thunder of his power who can understand?" – Job xxvi. 11-14. But O how different with us! We know not what a day nor an hour may bring forth. It is in this view of the subject we are to understand that time and chance happeneth to men, while no unforeseen event can possibly surprise the Lord our God. If one atom of created matter could transcend the bounds of God's absolute government, and fly uncontrolled by his divine providence, millions of atoms might also fly at random, until all the atoms of which the whole creation is composed would escape his

government. If one event, however minute and trifling it may seem to us, can come to pass without his knowledge or decree, who will prove to us that two events may not? and, if two, why not ten thousand? and, by the same rule, we could not prove that God possesses any real or absolute government at all.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
June 1, 1844

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 431 – 434

LUKE X. 38-42.

This Scripture presents a plain statement of our Lord Jesus having entered the house of Martha, and of her troubles, and of her complaint against her sister Mary, who had taken her position at the feet of Jesus to hear his word, leaving Martha to serve alone, and the reply of Jesus to Martha.

Whatever instruction we may receive from the record of this incident in the history of our Lord in the days of his incarnation, in reproving us as his disciples for worldly mindedness, or sacrificing our spiritual privileges to our worldly cares and labors, we will venture to give, as our view of the subject, that this case and circumstance bears a striking analogy to the two branches of the Redeemer's church, under the two covenants. Martha representing the people of God under the old, and Mary representing the church in her gospel organization under the new covenant.

1. It was Martha's house into which Christ had entered, and in which this incident occurred. If then, Martha represented the church under the law, or legal covenants, it was into her house that he entered, for in his advent to our world, he was made under the law, came under its obligations, was circumcised and assumed the obligation to do the whole law, and declared that he had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it; and that heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should pass away until all was fulfilled.

2. Martha had a sister Mary in the house. So it was said by the people of God under the old dispensation, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts,"&c. - Songs viii. 8. The people of God were all under the law, and all required to be redeemed therefrom, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and the original constituents of the church in her

gospel organization were found in Judea and Jerusalem, and in the regions round about Jordan. Lost sheep of the house of Israel.

3. Martha was careful and cumbered with much serving; so were all the Old Testament saints under that testament or covenant; for it was a covenant of works, and allowed no time to rest, or to sit down at the feet of Jesus to feast on his words. The rigid demands of the law called for all their mind, might and strength; nothing less than a perfect and perpetual obedience would suffice, and therefore Martha had no leisure.

4. Mary, or the gospel church, under the new covenant, has entered into rest. As all who possess a vital faith in Christ, do cease from their own works, as God did from his. They are redeemed from under the law, and delivered from the works thereof, and are no more under the law but under the grace. The Son has made them free, and they are free indeed. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to all them that believe; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile. They sit down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to their taste. They live on every word that proceedeth out of his mouth, for his words are spirit and they are life. Therefore the disciples could well say, “Unto whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life.” To them his words are like apples of gold in pictures of silver. He stays them with flagons, and comforts them with apples, or with his words.

5. Martha complained that Mary had left her to serve alone, and desired the Master to bid her to help her serve. This was the case with the legalists, at that time, and all legalists from that day to this, have been fretting and worrying because those “Do Nothings,” as the new covenant saints are reproachfully called, are seated at the feet of Christ, where

they can receive his word. Great and bitter complaints were at that day made against the disciples of Jesus because they adhered not to the traditions of the fathers, because they kept not the law. The same complaints are still made by the children of the bond woman, against the children of the free woman, unto this day.

6. Martha seemed honestly to believe that Christ would disapprove of Mary's indolence, if his attention was called to it, and therefore she suggested that he should reprove her. Just so the Arminians of our day seem soberly to believe that there is something wrong in depending alone for salvation on the Lord Jesus Christ. And they sometimes go as far as Martha did, in praying our Lord to set his people to work.

But our Lord's words are full of consolation to the weary and heavy laden saints. While Martha's mind was divided in the drudgery of many things, One thing only was needful. That one thing was worth more than Martha's many things; and Mary had chosen it, and it should never be taken from her. It is the choice of all who are experimentally delivered from the works of the law, and brought to the feet of Jesus to learn of him, and they do find rest to their soul who retire from the thunders of the law, and rest at the feet of the blessed Redeemer.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 436 - 438

LUKE 11:9,10

Brother Beebe: I am an enquirer after the right way. Will you please give me your views on Luke 11:9,10, "And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh fmdeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened."

Yours, in hope of eternal life,
J.C. L. Miller.

Reply: The gracious encouragement given in this text to pray, and the assurance of the answer of prayer, is too plainly written to require much labor or argument by way of explanation. Yet plainly as the subject is stated to the enlightened child of God who honestly enquires after, and desires to know and walk in the truth as it is in Jesus, it is like all other scriptures, dark and obscure to the natural man who receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: and even the saints may be perplexed by the perversions of ignorant or designing men who handle the sacred word of God deceitfully, and darken counsel by words without knowledge. Those who, in defiance of heaven and contradiction of the express testimony of the scriptures, preach a conditional and work-mongrel doctrine of offers and pro-offers of grace, indiscriminately made to all mankind, often repeat the text under consideration as though it had been addressed alike to all, and represent the Savior as saying to carnal, graceless and dead sinners that they may have eternal salvation by asking for it; that the Lord has made the terms so easy as to bring the salvation of sinners within the reach of all men, and so cheap that all may secure by purchase an interest in the kingdom of God. But, if such a theory were true, would not salvation be attainable by works? If the sinner must do

something to secure his salvation, however little that something may be, or however easily performed, the doing of it would be an indispensable condition, and his salvation or damnation would rest on his compliance with the terms; but such we know is not the case; for God has said of all who are saved, "And their salvation is of me, saith the Lord." "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." If salvation be of God, it is not of men; and if by grace, then it is not of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The apostle informs us that all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, Yea, and in him, Amen, to the glory of God by us. This being the case, to be interested in them, we must be in Christ as the branch is in the Vine. There are no gospel promises out of Christ, but unto the members of the body of Christ, who were chosen of God in him before the foundation of the world, are given exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature (II Peter 1:4). For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

In the chapter from which our subject is taken, one of his disciples said unto him, "Lord, teach us to pray," etc. "And he said unto *them,"* that is, to his disciples, one of whom had asked for this instruction, "When thou prayest, say, Our Father," etc. None but the children of God can, in truth, call God their Father. If he is indeed our Father, it is because our spiritual, immortal or eternal life, was with him from everlasting, and because he hath of his own will begotten us by the *word* of his power; and we are consequently born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word God, which liveth and abideth forever. To such, and only to such, gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man,

but of God. These are the children of God, and God is their Father. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:14).” “Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his (Romans 8:9).” To be a son or child of God, and entitled to the privilege of calling God our Father is to be begotten and born of God, and to possess the Spirit of Christ; and but by that Spirit, and through that Christ alone can any man have access to God; for Jesus expressly declares, “No man can come unto the Father, but by me.” All his children are taught of God and every one that is taught of God cometh to Christ; while no man cometh unto Christ, except his Father which sent him draw them. It is, therefore, preposterous to pretend that Jesus was teaching any others to pray, but such as were by a spiritual birth qualified to worship God in Spirit and in truth, by praying with the Spirit and with the understanding also; for God is a spirit and can only be approached by the spirit, through Christ Jesus our Lord. We know not how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us according to the will of God. To such as are born of God, led by the Spirit of God, and are followers of Christ is the distinguishing appellation, *disciple* of Christ given in the scriptures, for except we obey and follow him we cannot be his disciples, but “Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” To his disciples Jesus said,

And I say unto you. Are any so dull as to believe that this form of words means that he saith this to all mankind? Can these words without violence be applied to those to whom he had said, Ye shall seek me, and ye shall not find me, and ye shall die in your sins, etc.? “I say,” tis Jesus speaks. It is the voice of him who called the world into being, who speaks the word and it stands fast; who commands and it is done. There is power and majesty, grace and salvation in his word, for he says, “The words that I speak unto you they are spirit and

they are life." And when the word goes forth out of his mouth, it shall not return to him void of the word whereunto he hath sent it. Nor can his word miscarry. What he says to you does not mean somebody else. Well, what does he here say to his disciples? "Ask, and it shall be given you." The disciple in *asking,* virtually acknowledges his need of that for which he asks, and his dependence of God to supply his needs. He acknowledges that the name of Father is a hallowed, or consecrated name expressive of vital relationship, and that he has confidence in his Father which is in heaven, that he is able and willing to supply all that he is led by the spirit of prayer to ask for. And the faith of the Son of God in the heart of the disciples lays hold of the blessed assurance that what he is so led to ask for shall be given to him. Not that all that our fleshy lusts may desire or prompt us to ask for is pledged to us in this sacred text; for we sometimes ask amiss, for things to consume upon our lusts, and then we ask and we receive not. God in great mercy to us withholds such things as would be injurious to us. But what we are taught by Christ to ask, in spirit and manner and form as expressed in the prayer in the context, from the second to the fifth verse of this chapter, in the spirit of that submission which says, thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. When looking to God, day by day for daily supplies of temporal and spiritual support and subsistence, and when cherishing the same spirit of forgiveness to our enemies that we ask God to bestow on us. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespass. *But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses* (Mark 11:25-26)." This last quoted scripture may explain to us why many of our prayers are shut out; especially when we are desiring that God should crush our enemies, and lavish his gifts on us and on our friends. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, *and pray for them*

which dispitefully use you and persecute you: That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: etc. (Matthew 5:44-45)." If God forgives us, only as we forgive those who trespass against us, what will be our fate? Do we mark iniquity against our neighbor, brother or fellow being, and ask God to blot out our transgressions? How vain are such prayers! Do we ask God to be merciful to our unrighteousness and remember our iniquities no more? Then let us not seek revenge on those we deem to be our foes. The word and spirit of our God must teach us what to ask for, how to ask, and in what spirit and in what name to approach our heart-searching and rein-trying God, and thus directed we shall ask, and God will hear, and we shall receive all that we ask for, for the Spirit of truth and holiness will not lead us to pray for any things that God will withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Seek, and ye shall find. Seeking not only implies a desire to find a cherished treasure, but also such qualifications as blind or dead men do not possess. To seek is to look or to search for something that is hidden; and in order to seek we must have life, and sight, but until quickened by the Spirit we are both dead in sins, and blind to everything of a spiritual nature. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and that is the very first thing the children of God are commanded to seek for. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things (temporal mercies) shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:33)." All that we require to seek is embraced in the kingdom of God and the righteousness of God. These we need, for under no other government can we be happy or at home, and in no other righteousness can we be holy and acceptable to God. But as the Kingdom of God is spiritual, the natural man cannot see it, or receive it; for it is only spiritually discerned. In that blessed kingdom we should be but aliens and strangers unless qualified for fellow-citizenship with the

saints, by the righteousness of God. To seek for some popular religious establishment, called a church, and our own righteousness, requires no new birth, no circumcision of heart, of ears, or of eyes; for the world will recognize its own. But to seek successfully the Kingdom over which the blessed Jesus presides, and the flaming righteousness of God, without which we can in no wise be saved, requires that we shall be of him in Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. This familiar figure presents the prayers of the saints, as knocking at Mercy's door. As the weary traveler would gain admittance in the house for rest, food and comfort approaches the door, and knocks for admittance, and as the child would come in to his father's house and mingle with the children, and with them participate in the provisions and comforts of the family, so the heaven-born child of God seeks for the church of God, and approaching the door of the Sheepfold, (for he would not climb up some other way) he knocks, or gives the signal; saying perhaps in the language of the psalmist, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." This kind of knocking never fails to receive a happy response, "Come in thou blessed of the Lord." "Why tarry thou, arise and be baptized," etc. Or if we apply this figure to our knocking at Mercy's door, the result is certain, for God himself has promised to open the door to all such. This is attested by all the inmates of the house of God. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. What child of God has ever been turned away empty when asking supplies at the throne of Grace, with the spirit and with the understanding, and in the name of Jesus? Not even Jonah when in the belly of hell, was unsuccessful in seeking his God with his face turned towards the holy temple at Jerusalem. And when we knock at the door of Mercy, how consoling is

the assurance, given in the text, “To him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

“Enough, my gracious God,
Let faith triumphant cry,
My heart can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die.”

The subject affords great consolation to the humble, tried and trembling children of God, who feel that they have nothing in their hands to bring as an oblation or offering to God, to procure his favor, but unworthy to pronounce his sacred name. Hungry, thirsting, naked, destitute and helpless, Jesus bids them come; approach his mercy seat, come boldly to the throne of grace, to ask for mercy, and find grace to help in every time of need.

“Poor tempest-tossed soul, be still,
My promis’d grace receive.
‘Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.”

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 98-103

LUKE 12:49-51

Brother Joshua Dickerson, of Ohio, desires our views on Luke 12:49-51, and in complying with his request, we will notice the three verses in the order in which they are recorded. They read thus:

"I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division."

Although the heavenly messengers who announced the advent of our Savior made the plains of Judah vocal with their lofty notes of "Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men," clearly setting forth that the Savior's mission was a mission of peace; that he came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them; and that the very spirit of the gospel is love to God and love men; and that none can enjoy the spirit of Christ in their hearts while they cherish ill will to their fellow men, still the advent of the Prince of Peace was designed to kindle a fire on the earth that should never be quenched until the enemies of the Lord shall all be consumed and the children of God thoroughly purified as the gold. In the first verse of our text, Jesus says, in most positive and emphatic language, "I am come to send fire on the earth." Not literally by an incendiary torch by him or any of his followers, applied to the persons or property of any of the children of men for when his indignant disciples, on one sore provocation felt disposed to command fire from heaven to consume a village of the Samaritans, because the wicked inhabitants did not receive him, Jesus rebuked them, and told them plainly that he came for no such murderous or destructive purpose. True, these Samaritans were wicked,

and enemies of Christ and his cause, but the spirit which the disciples evinced, to resent by retaliation, was not the Spirit of Christ. It is possible that some of Christ's disciples have subsequently been deceived by the same spirit of revenge which Christ rebuked in James and John on that occasion. It would be well, at least, before indulging in so unlovely a spirit, to enquire of Jesus, as James and John did, whether it be his will that we invoke or command fire for the destruction of either friends or foes.

To harmonize with the uniform teachings and works of the Messiah, and the very spirit of the gospel, his words in our text are to be understood as being metaphorically used, and used to signify the great commotion, strife, opposition and persecution his coming should produce in the earth, and the tribulation his people would have to encounter, and the cleansing and purifying effect upon his church, and the final inevitable destruction of his enemies, and the everlasting salvation of his people. All that was written of him in the law, the prophets, and in the psalms, must be accomplished. And these had all foretold the events to which Christ evidently alluded. A few passages from the many must suffice at this time.

The prophet Malachi, foretelling the day of our Lord, says, "For, behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet... (Malachi 4:1-3)." "And the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple," etc. "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap, and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver," etc. Isaiah says, "For every battle of the warrior is

with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:5,6)." Again, "Therefore shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire; and the light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame, and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers in one day (Isaiah 10:16,17)." "For behold the Lord will come with fire, and with his chariots, like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and his rebuke with flames of fire; for by fire and by his sword will the Lord plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many (Isaiah 66:15,16)."

In the foregoing passages, as well as in many others to which we might refer, we have abundant testimony that the advent or coming of Christ was designed and before ordained to send fire on the earth, so that his declaration in our text is fully sustained by the testimony of prophecy, all of which he came to fulfill. Fire is the most grand and magnificent of all the elements of nature, and shall survive and triumph over all the rest, melting them with fervent heat and consigning them all to final conflagration. The peculiar properties of fire are light and heat. Its nature is searching, melting and consuming. It is figuratively used in the scriptures to signify and illustrate several very important things.

First. It is applied to God himself. "For our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29)." To Jerusalem he will be "A wall of fire round about, and the glory in the midst of her (Zechariah 2:5)." In the application of the metaphor to God himself in the first of these scriptures, he is called a consuming fire, signifying the purity and holiness of his nature, that noting unholy or impure can endure his

presence. As set forth in his fiery law, the Mount Sinai where God proclaimed its precepts, we are told, “burned with fire (Hebrews 12:18).” And that he will be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, when, in the person of his Son, he shall come in the last day to judge the world in righteousness, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Thessalonians 1:7,8). But in the text, Zechariah 2:5, he is a wall of fire for the protection and glory of Jerusalem. Thus when Moses saw the bush enveloped in flame, he was astonished that the bush was not consumed. That bush was a type of the church, and the God of Abraham and of Isaac, and Jacob was in the midst of the burning bush; not to consume, but to protect it. So also with the cloud by day, which was a pillar of fire by night unto the Hebrews in the wilderness. God was in the cloud and in the pillar of fire, for the destruction of their enemies, and for the protection of his covenant people. He sits as a refiner’s fire, not to consume, but to purge the sons of Levi. He will consume their dross and purge out their impurities, and he will utterly destroy his enemies with unquenchable fire. But his saints, like their representatives in the furnace of the idolatrous king of Babylon, shall come forth unsinged by the fire and uncontaminated by the furnace, for the form of the fourth is in their midst, and God has promised that the flames shall not kindle upon them (Isaiah 42:2).

Second. This metaphor is used to signify the word or words of God. “Is not my word like afire, saith the Lord (Jeremiah 23:29).” The searching, powerful and irresistible omnipotence of every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God is frequently set forth by the similitude of fire; an element that no flesh can stand before. In their effect upon the wicked, his words are represented as the “Rod of his mouth.” “Behold, the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger, and the burden thereof is heavy; his lips are full of indignations, and his tongue as a devouring fire, and his

breath as an overflowing stream... (Isaiah 30:27,28).” “And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked (Isaiah 11:4).” Compare this last text with II Thessalonians 2:7,8: “For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall *consume* with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” “For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made it deep and large; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the *breath of the Lord,* like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it (Isaiah 30:33).” “But upon Mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness, and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions; and the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau; for the Lord hath spoken it (Obadiah 17,18).” “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth (Psalm 49:1-5).” The word, in its power and vitality, is well compared to fire in its effects on different objects. It melts the wax, but it hardens the clay; it burns up the hay, wood and stubble, but it refines the silver and purifies the gold. The written testimony or word of God contained in the holy scriptures, when brought in contact with the doctrines of men and devils, will discriminate between truth and error, as fire will separate between gold and dross. Paul says, “If any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man’s work shall be made

manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is (I Corinthians 3:12,13)."

We will suppose a church started upon the foundation which Paul as a wise master builder has laid, which he says is Christ Jesus, and then, like the churches of Galatia, having began well, are afterward subverted and drawn into error; or like the Corinthians, to whom he was writing, because disorderly in doctrine or practice, how is the wrong to be detected but by the searching power of the fire of God's word? If we try by any other test we cannot detect the wrong, for human wisdom is vain; it can demonstrate nothing of a spiritual nature. But let every man's work be tried by the scriptures of truth, and while it will burn up all the wood, hay and stubble, it will prove that the incombustible materials cannot be burned. To this fiery ordeal every doctrine and theory must and shall be brought. God will judge the world at the last day according to Paul's gospel; that is, according to God's word. The humble child of God desires this trial. "Search me, O God, and try me," is his language; while he that doeth evil hateth the light, because his deeds are evil. Amaziah, the wicked priest of Bethel, could not stand before the burning truth of God's words which the prophet Amos brought, and he accused the prophet of disloyalty to the king, treason to the nation, and conspiracy against the government of Israel, and tried to intimidate and drive him to some other place to eat bread and prophesy. See Amos 7:10,13. It was so also with Micaiah. Ahab could not endure the word of the Lord by him, and he was incarcerated and sentenced to eat the bread and drink the water of affliction. Thousands of instances are recorded to the same effect. But although king-craft and priest-craft, and all who fatten on their patronage, may wreak their vengeance on the messengers of the Lord, the fire of his word they can not quench. They may seem, for a time, to triumph in their suppression of the truth, but they

stand on slippery places, and fiery billows roll beneath their sliding feet.

"Those heaps of wrath, by slow degrees,
Are forced into a flame,
But kindled, O! how fierce they blaze,
And rend old nature's frame."

There are multitudes of what are called Christian churches scattered all over our land, in which the most pernicious doctrines are promulgated. Would not a plain, clear and unreserved presentation of the word of God among them be like fire among the corn of the Philistines? But,

Third. The ministers of our Lord Jesus Christ are metaphorically represented as fire. Not because they of themselves possess any power superior to that of other men; nor can they receive that power from any other source than from the Lord. But the Lord "Maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flaming fire (Psalm 104:4; Hebrews 1:7)." This is what *He,* God himself, maketh them, by calling them by his grace, quickening them by his spirit, and then putting his words in their mouth. The word of the Lord was like fire shut up in the bones of the prophet Jeremiah. When this prophet had encountered Pashur, the priest, and had been tortured in the stocks for telling the truth, and the word of the Lord had become a reproach, even to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, he became discouraged, as perhaps some of the Lord's servants do at the present day, and resolved, saying, "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more of his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay (Jeremiah 20:9)." The apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, on the day of Pentecost; and cloven tongues of fire were given them, so that they could

not forbear to publish the gospel in the face of the most bitter opposition and persecution.

But here we must discriminate between the fire itself, which is the word and spirit of the Lord, and those who were under its power and influence. A candle can give no light until it is lighted by the application of fire, and then it burns and gives light to all that are in the house. It was thus when a live coal from off the altar of the Lord had touched the mouth of Isaiah, he was qualified to receive his commission, to bear the messages of the Lord to Israel, and like a lighted candle, he began to shine. John the Baptist also was *a burning and a shining light,* bearing witness of Jesus (John 5:35); for he came from God and burned with celestial fire. This fire is kindled in the hearts of those who are called to the ministry of our Lord, as in the heart of the two who said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures (Luke 24:32)?" This is the fire that burns upon the sacred altar of our God, which warms the hearts of all who have ever felt its melting power and experienced its burning love; and it is in all respects unlike that flame which sets on fire the course of nature; for James informs us that that is set on fire of hell.

This is the fire, if we mistake not, which Jesus came to send on the earth. It is the fire of heaven; it burns in the enraptured spirits around the eternal throne. It consumes nothing that is pure and holy; it shines with uncreated radiance, and is the true light of life and immortality. O, for its sacred flame to warm our cold hearts, quicken and animate our languid affections, consume our dross and tin, and melt us in love to God, love to his cause, his doctrine, his ordinances, and all his precepts. This holy fire from heaven, sent forth by our Redeemer on the earth, must so illuminate the church as to make her like a city that is set upon a hill, whose light cannot be hid. It will also qualify not only the

ministers of the word, but all the saints individually and collectively to so let their light shine as to glorify their Father in heaven, from whom they have received it. This fire, sent forth into the world, must come in contact with the darkness of this world, and so provoke the wrath of the prince of darkness, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. And it will assuredly provoke the rage and malice of wicked men who love darkness more than light, because it reveals hidden things of dishonesty, exposes hypocrisy and delusion, and because it exalts God and abases the sinner in the dust. This fire proceeds out of the mouth of God, and as God is true, it shall ultimately consume anti-christ, which is not to be done by armies in the tented field, recklessly shedding the blood of their fellows, but it shall be done by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. His words are fire, and they proceed out of his mouth, as the breath of the Lord, which shall not return unto him void of the work whereunto he has sent it.

This fire is kindled in Zion. The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame. “Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God (I Peter 4:17).” “When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, *and by the spirit of burning;* And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory there shall be a defence (Isaiah 4:4,5).” The fire of the Lord shall fill his enemies with consternation and dismay, and they shall realize the force of the words of the prophet, “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.” And they are heard to cry out in terror, “Who among us shall

dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings (Isaiah 33:14).” As our Redeemer has come to fulfill these predictions, and to execute these judgments, “Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth (Malachi 3:2).” How awfully sublime and terrible the display described by in-spired men of God, “Clouds and darkness are round about him. A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlighten the world. The earth is afraid. The hills melt like wax at his presence (Psalm 97:2-5).” “Zion heard and was glad, and the daughters of Judah rejoiced because of thy judgments, O Lord.”

This fire Christ came to send on the earth; this collision of truth with falsehood, of righteousness against unrighteousness, of holiness against sin, and of love against hatred, Christ came to inaugurate and lend in triumph through the earth. With his sword upon his thigh, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, he rides prosperously, conquering to conquer, until all enemies shall be subdued and put under his feet.

“*And what will I, if it be already kindled?*” This interrogative was not uttered to solicit, but to impart instruction. The conflict between light and darkness was already apparent in the earth. The powers of darkness were already arrayed against the light and glory of the Redeemer’s kingdom. In the former part of the chapter (Luke 12) the evidence of hostilities are seen. Hidden things must be exposed to light. Secrets whispered in closets should be proclaimed on housetops, and this exposure of the hidden things of dishonesty should so much exasperate the convicted parties, as to make them seek revenge by taking the life of the disciples of our Lord, as well as that of the Master himself. This in many cases they should be suffered to do, that the cup of their wickedness might be filled up. But for the

encouragement of his trembling followers he bids them, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, for that is the utmost extent of their restricted power; but fear him whose superior and supreme power controls your destiny for time and eternity. God, whose careful providence protects the little sparrows, has numbered the very hairs of your heads, and in this, now begun, and still progressive conflict will shield his saints, who at the exposure of life and liberty, own his name before men and suffer no evil to reach them that he will not overrule to their good and his glory. As this already kindled fire should increase to bursting flames, then they shall bring you into the synagogues, and unto magistrates and powers, but even then, when this battle shall be with burning and fuel of fire, think not what ye shall say. The battle is the Lord's. It is not to be conducted on the part of Michael, your prince, or any of those who are with him, of the "called, and chosen, and faithful," with carnal weapons. No revengeful spirit or disposition to retaliate or render evil for evil will be tolerated in any of the soldiers of the cross. Nor should they consult their own reason for words, but confide wholly in God, "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." The circumstance recorded in this chapter of an application made to Christ, to adjudicate the settlement of a disputed inheritance, afforded opportunity for him to disclaim all connection between civil and ecclesiastical matters, and at the same time striking at the root of the difficulty in which the disputants were contending, he gave wholesome instructions and warning against covetousness, illustrating his admonition by the parable of the rich man, whose whole concern was to provide much goods for many years on the very night in which his soul was required of him. This opportunity was improved by solemn admonitions to his disciples against an undue concern for the things of this world, seeing that their heavenly Father knew what was needful for them, and he would amply provide. They were admonished to have their loins girded about, and their lights

burning, like men who were waiting for their Lord, and to be ready at all times, inasmuch as they knew not at what hour their Lord would come. It was in connection with these important instructions that he said to them: “I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled.” That the fire was already kindled, and what he would, or what he himself was personally to share in the conflict, is very forcibly set forth in the next verse of our text, the consideration of which, for want of space, we defer till our next number.

(To be continued.)

Middletown, N.Y.,
April 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 17 – 25

LUKE 12:49-51

(Continued)

“I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay; but rather division.”

We come now to offer some remarks upon the second verse of our text, which seems to answer the enquiry instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ as to what he would, or what part he was to take personally in the flaming dispensation, which was to melt down the elements of the old heavens and earth, and ultimately to consume anti-Christ by the Spirit of his mouth, and to destroy the man of sin by the brightness of his coming. It was not a fire which he was to send and witness as a disinterested spectator, but into which he was to be himself baptized, immersed, overwhelmed, or buried quite. As God was in the flame which Moses saw in the bush, as he was in the pillar of fire which led the way of the Hebrews, and as the form of the Son of God was in the midst of the burning furnace with his three Hebrew servants, so was he to enter and prove the temperature of the furnace in which he has chosen his children, and which they are to pass through under the gospel dispensation. “But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!” The baptism of which he spake was evidently his sufferings of death upon the cross, his bearing in his own body the sins of his people, his putting away their sins by the sacrifice of himself, when here in his own body all the bolts of wrath which were due for all the sins of all his people, from the beginning of time to the end of the world, should fall on him. For this baptism of sufferings he came into the world.

God hath laid on him the sins of all his members, made him the Surety, made him who knew no sin to be made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. And do we view him stricken of God and afflicted? Then, O remember, it was “for the transgression of his people he was stricken!” “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows.” “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” The very word *baptize* or *baptized,* is the most significant and expressive word in all the languages ever used by mortals to express the sufferings of the Son of God when he poured out his soul for sin, and bore the crushing weight of wrath which no other being in earth or heaven had power to bear. He was not *rantized,* or sprinkled with sufferings, but was plunged into and overwhelmed with them. Baptized into death. The same idea is prophetically expressed by the Psalmist in Chapter 42, Verse 7, “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts; all thy waves and thy billows are gone over me.” The sign of the prophet Jonah is used by divine authority to set forth the baptism of Christ into death; for as Jonah was plunged to the bottom of the sea, overwhelmed and buried three days and three nights, even so (in the baptism of which our Savior speaks in our text) the Son of Man should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Buried by baptism into death. Of this baptism Jesus spake in answer to the request of the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said unto them, Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? The ordinance of Christian baptism, as well as the Supper, sets forth the Lord’s death and sufferings, and in baptism his resurrection is also clearly represented. Our Lord had been baptized by John in Jordan, giving an example to his followers, and he said, “For thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness.” But now the dreadful hour approached when

he must be plunged “deep in the shades of gloomy death,” and from thence arise from the dead, as in baptism, the subject is not only immersed in the watery grave, but raised up again from that grave. But, without enlarging on the figurative import of baptism, as emblematical of the death and resurrection, first of Christ the first fruits, and then afterwards of them that are Christ’s at his coming, we will return to the consideration of the baptism of overwhelming sufferings of which he speaks in our text.

If the fallacious arguments of infant and adult sprinklers in their extravagant efforts to pervert the ordinance of baptism were valid, how convenient it would have been for the Redeemer to have said, There is no special virtue in sufferings; one drop or a few drops are as good as a fountain; a little suffering, by the same rule, would do, without sinking down in deep waters, where there is no standing. But, unlike the deceivers of this evil day, there was no guile in his mouth. He met the stern demands of eternal Justice, drank the dreadful cup, and received the baptism which was appointed. It was for this end he came into the world; and dreadful as was the storm of wrath, the bolts of heaven, the weighty vengeance of Almighty God, he must endure it all. But oh! how was he straitened till it was accomplished! Remember it was in his immaculate body he bore our sins; and in that body he knew all the feelings of our infirmities. He was made a little lower than the angels for the sufferings of death. Was made flesh, was made of a woman, and made under the law. Took on him part of the same flesh and blood that his children are partakers of, and in that flesh was as keenly sensitive to pain and sufferings as we are. He could dread the terrible conflict when he should grapple with the monster death in his most frightful form. How awful was the hour when his holy soul was in an agony in the garden, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling to the ground. Here was a straitened place for his soul.

The sword of heaven awoke against the Shepherd; the vengeful stroke must fall upon the Man who is the fellow of the God of hosts. No lenity could be granted in the case; his agonizing soul, exceeding sorrowful even unto death, his bloody sweat, his strong crying and tears, could procure for him no relief! "O! my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass!" But it is not possible. Then, "Father, save me from this hour!" Still no respite. The Father had given him this cup, and he must drink its dregs. From heaven the sympathizing angels descend and throng around him, ministering to him. But the stern decree was irrevokable. Billows must sweep over him. Deep waters must come into his soul. Sprinkling for baptism would not do. God's honor, as well as the salvation of millions, hinged on this fearful hour. There could be no abatement of the rigid demand of law and justice. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not a jot or tittle of the law could fail till all was completely fulfilled. The fire was kindled on the holy altar; the suffering victim is the Lamb of God, a Lamb truly without blemish, the firstling of his flock must, through the Eternal Spirit, offer himself without spot unto God. Where shall we find language to express the full import of the Savior's words, "How am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Already the enkindled fire is felt in his writhing, struggling soul; but still more fiercely shall it burn until the offering is consumed upon the burning altar. The cold and chilling waves of death already lave his sacred feet; but deeper and still deeper must He descend into its icy stream! There is no retreat; the way is strait. The stormy billows rear their frightful foaming crest. Deep crieth unto deep. The waterspouts are heard! Deep waters come into his soul, and the raging billows of death go over him! "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" The startled heavens respond! The affrighted sun grows pale and dim, and wraps her luster in a vail of horrid darkness! The trembling earth is rocked with an earthquake, and shudders to her utmost centre! The adamantine rocks are riven asunder! The

slumbering dead from the repose of ages spring from their opened graves! The veil of the temple is rent in sunder! The immersion is complete. The baptism is accomplished. Deep in the shades of gloomy death the dear Redeemer has descended, and all the billows have gone over him.

"'Tis done! the dreadful debt is paid;
The great atonement now is made;
Ye saints, on him your guilt was laid;
For you he bled and died!

"For you his tender soul did move;
For you he left the courts above
That you the heights and depths might prove,
And lengths and breadths of perfect love,

In Christ your baptized Lord."

But baptism signifies resurrection as well as death and burial; and we conceive that it was no less indispensably necessary that Christ should rise from the dead than it was that he should die and be buried. He was delivered for our transgressions, and, glory to his exalted name, he has by his one offering forever perfected them that are sanctified; in his death he canceled all the demands of law and justice, and secured his people from hell and wrath; but to complete the baptism he must arise for our justification. Even if our sins were all washed away by his blood and canceled by his death, we could not go to heaven, even when the thunder of the law was hushed by his atoning blood, unless we partake of his resurrection life. The same Spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead must also quicken our mortal bodies by his Spirit dwelling in us. If Christ be not risen, all our hopes must perish; and of all men we are the most miserable. All who have part in his death have part also in his resurrection. The church is his body and members in particular. Christ is the

life or vitality of that body. It was not possible, therefore, that he should be holden of death, only until the early dawning of the appointed day. Truly, the Lord is risen indeed; and has become the first-fruits of them that slept. His people, which are his body, which were "Buried with him by baptism into death," are "quickened together with him and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The risen Jesus is our life; it is hidden with him in God; and when he shall appear, we shall be like him. We are married unto him that is risen from the dead, and being married we are no more twain, but one; and what God has thus joined neither earth nor hell can rend asunder.

"In him his members on the tree,
Fulfill'd the law's demands,
'Tis 'i in them, and they in me,'
For thus the union stands.

Since Jesus slept among the dead,
His saints have naught to fear;
For with their glorious suffering Head,
His members sojourn'd there.

When from the tomb we see him rise
Triumphant o'er his foes,
He bore his members to the skies;
With Jesus they arose."

The sons of Zebedee were told that they should "drink of the same cup which Jesus drank of, and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized." And the apostle Paul makes this appeal to the children of God: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk

in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection (Romans 6:3-5)."

(To be continued)

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 1, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 26 - 31

LUKE 12:49-51

(Concluded)

We come now to offer some remarks on the third and last verse of the text proposed for consideration, viz.:

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on the earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather a division."

How mysterious and inscrutable are the ways of God! How unlike the ways and thoughts of finite beings! No man by searching can find him out, or trace his footsteps, which are in the mighty deep. The suppositions and conclusions of even his saints are only correct and reliable so far as they are based upon the revelations made to them by the word and Spirit of their God. The very appeal of our Lord to his disciples in this text implies that the disciples were indulging in the belief or supposition that the advent of Christ was designed of God to give peace on the earth, and we are not disposed to doubt that they were greatly amazed when Jesus told them plainly that such was not the design of his coming. Before, however, we impute dullness of perception to them, let us enquire whether the same apparent causes which led them to suppose he had come to give peace on the earth would not have led us to the same supposition. There was to favor their supposition:

1. The very title applied to him in prophecy, The Prince of Peace, and the declaration that of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end; and that he is known in the New Testament as "The very God of Peace," who shall shortly bruise Satan under the feet of his disciples, we would naturally suppose would have led them to the conclusion that he had now come to give peace on the earth.

2. The song of the heavenly messengers who announced his birth to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, *on earth peace, good will toward men,* " was certainly calculated to strengthen their supposition.

3. His humble birth most clearly indicated a peaceful mission. No demonstrations of terror, no clouds of wrath, no fiery bolts, or startling thunder tones were seen or heard. Beaming mercy smiled, "and wrath stood silent by." No flaming sword of vengeance flashed in his hand; no terrors darkened on his brow; the holy babe of Bethlehem reposed in a manger without a complaining word. Was ever such condescension witnessed in heaven or on earth before? Who would not have supposed that he had come to give peace on the earth?

4. From the example presented in his holy life, his bitter death, and his triumphant resurrection, might we not infer that the Meek and Lowly Lamb of God had come to hush the clamor of war, to allay the spirit of strife and discord, and to inaugurate a dispensation of the most perfect peace? He went about doing good; when he was reviled, he reviled not again, when the greatest provocations were given - when insulted, reviled, buffeted, spit upon, and persecuted, he made no resistance, showed no resentment, but bore it all patiently. And when led forth to prison and to death, he went like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And when in the agony of the cross, mocked and derided he cried, Father forgive, for they know not what they do, all seemed to say that he came to give peace on the earth.

5. The laws which he enacted in his kingdom, and the special instructions and commandments which he gave to his people, forbidding them the use of carnal weapons, and forbidding that they should even resent injuries maliciously done to

them, but to do good to them who persecuted and evily entreated them, and to forgive from their hearts all who trespassed against them, as they desired that God should forgive them, and positively forbidding them to avenge themselves; all went to show that in the dreadful conflicts which they were to encounter from a wicked world, although their blood should crimson the earth, still in no case should they be the aggressors, nor in any case, or under any circumstance should they retaliate, but submit their cause to him who has said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay." It is presumed that from all these considerations, the disciples supposed that their Lord had come to give peace on the earth.

It is true, nor should we so interpret these sayings of our Lord so as to contradict the glorious truth that Christ is himself the peace of his people; that his peace he leaves with them, his peace he has given unto them, and their peace shall flow unto them as a river, and as the waves of the sea; that "Great peace have they who love the law," and nothing shall offend them. But this is peace which the world knows not of; earth has no participation in it. But the saints, "Being justified by faith, have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Their eyes behold Jerusalem, the church of God, a peaceable habitation, a quiet resting place. By the atonement he has made peace, or reconciliation by the blood of his cross, not for the earth, not for the world in a general application of the term, but it is applicable exclusively to those who are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But our text will not allow us to suppose that the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ was designed to produce harmony between truth and error, or fellowship between Christ and Belial, or communion between the church of God and the temple of idols. His Spiritual kingdom and the world lying in

wickedness were to remain as distant from each other as before, and the distance to be more clearly marked. While the divine mission of the Son of God was to redeem his people unto God out of every tribe and kindred of the earth, it was not to arrest or retard the progressive development of the powers of darkness, or make the world more friendly, or less belligerent to the cause of truth and righteousness. The mystery of iniquity was to continue to work, and the cup of anti-christ was to be filled to its brim, and this could only be accomplished by their bitter persecution of Christ and his followers. “Many shall be purified and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand (Daniel 12:10).” The coming of Christ was not what brought sin and depravity into the world, but his advent was designed to bring the depravity of the world into manifestation. “If I had not come, etc., ye would not have had sin, but now ye have no cloak for your sins.” His coming had afforded occasion for the manifestation of their depravity, for “Ye have both seen and hated both me and my Father.”

If then, it may be asked, the meek and lowly Savior’s mission was not to destroy but to save; if in all his life, his doctrine, and his works he was holy, harmless and separate from sinners; if he went about doing good, not only to his friends, but also to his enemies, and if he neither himself assailed the rights of others, nor allowed his disciples to do so, how could his coming have a tendency to make a division, or send fire on the earth? We can only understand the conflict to arise from the opposite principles of holiness and sin, of truth and error, of spirit and flesh, of light and darkness. From the time that sin entered and mankind became depraved, all the fallen family of mankind have stood in hostile array against every sacred principle of truth and holiness, so that every display which God has been pleased to make of himself, and of the purity and perfection of his attributes has been in conflict

with the wicked disposition of fallen man. The manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in Abel provoked the opposite spirit of Cain, who was, as far as the spirit which actuated him was concerned, of the wicked one, and under that influence he slew his brother. The peace-loving and harmless spirit of Abel made no assault upon the rights of Cain, but being so opposite to the murderous spirit of Cain, that Cain was angry and slew him. "And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil and his brothers' righteous." Here in this first outbreak of malignant cruelty and murder we have an early development of the enmity which God has put between the serpent and the woman, and between her seed and his seed. Cain was an active and working religionist, and had a religion perfectly adapted to his fallen nature, but it was of the devil; for it was a revengeful, blood-thirsty religion, which clearly demonstrated its paternity; for "Satan was a murderer from the beginning." Therefore, all that kind of religion which delights in shedding blood was pre-figured in the religion of Cain. Jesus charged home upon the murderous and adulterous generation all the righteous blood which had ever been shed upon the earth, from that of Abel unto Zacharias; and Jude brands the same infamy upon the same race of religious fanatics under the present dispensation, which was marked upon their prototype. "Wo unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core (Jude 11)." As the light of truth detects and exposes the hidden things of darkness, so the coming of the Son of God into the world, and light of truth beaming from him through all his faithful witnesses, should reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come. To test and expose the murderous spirit of all false or worldly religion, our Redeemer says, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city (Matthew 23:34)." This

conflict as we have shown had been in the world from the days of Cain; had drenched the earth with blood again and again; this fire was already kindled, but yet more fiercely it should burn. The coming of Christ was not intended to harmonize the conflicting elements, but more clearly to develop them. There was nothing hid that should evade exposure; nothing whispered in the ear that should not be revealed on the house top. Hence his advent and ministry were violently opposed, and he was persecuted, and finally crucified by wicked hands. And the things done in the green tree would assuredly be repeated in the dry. Unto his faithful followers it is given, in his behalf, not only that they should believe on him, but also that they shall suffer for his sake. The ministers of Christ were sent forth as lambs in the midst of wolves, and duly advised that they should encounter the powers of darkness, false teachers, and vile deceivers, who should deceive many, and so turn the popular tide against them, but Jesus said to them, “All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake (Matthew 24:8,9).” So great should be the trial that many even of their professed brethren should “be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another; and many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold; but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved (Matthew 24:10-13).” “And this gospel of the kingdom,” with all these surroundings, attended with the same results, and subjecting its witnesses to the same cruel treatment, “shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.” The tribulations attending the promulgation of the gospel should witness in all the world, and down to the end of the world, who are, and who are not, the servants of the Most High God; the followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God. It should draw the line between the righteous and the wicked,

between them that serve God and them that serve him not. In this searching development, “There shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law (Luke 12:52,53).”

The division is now very apparent. The conflict is now raging. Blood in torrents is now flowing; the most violent passions of cruel and bloodthirsty men are now unbridled, and all is being pushed forward by raving fanatics who wear the clothing of sheep; who profess to be commissioned from heaven to stir up the deadly strife; and the number of those who breathe the spirit of love, of peace, and who labor to allay the murderous strife are in this day lamentably few and far between.

In conclusion, permit us to say, in all this conflict between truth and error, light and darkness, holiness and iniquity, not one drop of blood has ever been shed with the divine approbation, by any of the saints of the Most High God. Peter once from a reprehensible impulse of the flesh drew a carnal weapon defensively in vainly attempting to defend his Lord, and with it smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. But mark! Our Lord reproved his imprudent zeal, and healed the wound. “Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be.” The spirit of Christ in his children fulfills the righteousness of the law, causing them to love God supremely, and their neighbor as themselves, for on these two precepts of the divine code hang all the law and

the prophets. “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” Is he thy neighbor, thy friend? Reciprocate his friendship. Is he thine enemy? Love him and pray for him, for so your Savior expressly commands thee. But has thy neighbor trespassed against thee? Forgive him, as thou hopest to be thyself forgiven of God, against whom we have all trespassed. For if ye from your hearts do not forgive, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. “Wherefore, laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and all evil speakings.” “Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, having your conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they speak against you as evil doers, they may, by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as free and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men; love the brotherhood; Fear God. Honor the king. Servants, be subject to your own masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentile, but also to the froward. For this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully; for what glory is it, if, when ye are buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously (I Peter 2:11-23).”

Let it be remembered that the friendship of the world is enmity to God. “The wicked are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, but continually casts up mire and dirt.” And “There is no peace to the wicked, saith your God.” The way of peace they have not known, for misery and destruction are in all their ways, and their feet are swift to shed blood, for there is no fear of God before their eyes. But blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 31 – 37

LUKE XIV. 26.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Much complaint is made in our day against our Old School Baptist ministers preaching a doctrine which is discouraging to sinners, and calculated to repulse those who are religiously inclined; and we are very justly charged with being behind the times in our doctrine, and especially in our manner of preaching to sinners. We are enabled, by the faithful record of inspired truth, to ascertain our exact whereabouts, and find that we are full eighteen hundred years behind the speculative theories of the new divinity schools. When a vast assemblage pressed to hear Christ, on one occasion, he retired to the mountains, and there delivered to his disciples alone that memorable sermon on the Mount. On another occasion, when one volunteered to become his constant follower, he informed him that the foxes had holes, and the birds had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head. How discouraging!

On another occasion, when preaching to the people from a passage in Isaiah, which he declared was that day fulfilled in their ears; as soon as the assembly began to feel deeply interested in his preaching, and to wonder at the gracious words that he uttered, instead of seizing upon so favorable an opportunity to secure their good opinion of him, he referred them to some instances of the special sovereignty of God in his distinguishing favor to Naaman, the Syrian, and to the widow of Sarepta, when all the lepers and widows of Israel were passed by without favor. He certainly knew that this would fill the whole assembly with wrath, which it did, and they rose up and thrust him out of the city, and led him

unto the brow of the hill whereon the city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. The connection of our text shows that on this occasion was presented another most favorable opportunity, speaking after the manner of the new school, to greatly increase the company of his disciples, but instead of using it for that purpose, when a great company came out to him, he turned and said to them, in the language of our text, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and his mother," &c., "he cannot be my disciple." This was truly discouraging to them. How little do men seem to know that our Lord had and still has power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given him. (John xvii. 2.)

But as we were desired to give our understanding of the meaning of this text, we will proceed to do so in as brief a manner as possible.

Whatever obscurity may seem to involve the words of our text, we may safely conclude that the hatred of parents and other relatives, does not mean to conflict with the express requisition of the law to love and honor our father and our mother, or the doctrine taught by Paul, that as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it, even so ought men to love their own wives. The relative obligations of parents and children, husbands and wives, and masters and servants, in all cases bind them to love and not hate one another. And Paul, when describing the excessive wickedness of the last days, speaks, among other things, of men being without natural affection, as the very extreme of depravity and wickedness. So far was our Lord Jesus Christ from encouraging that kind of hatred, he commanded his disciples to love even their enemies. His gospel is a gospel of peace on earth and good will towards men. But still there is a sense in which all who are truly disciples of our Lord and Master, do hate father, mother, wife and children, and their own lives

also; and that is the same sense in which they hate the world. For if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

This hatred of kindred is not a malicious hatred, but a hatred perfectly compatible with the strictest injunctions to love all, both friends and enemies, to do good to them that despitefully use and persecute us. However paradoxical this may seem, when viewed only in the light of human reason, every true disciple of Christ will find in their own experience, in what they feel, and the emotions of their hearts, that while they tenderly love their parents, wives, children, and their own lives, as the gifts and blessings which God has bestowed, they hate that earthly, depraved, sinful nature that they find in father, mother, wife and child, and also, and more abundantly, they find and hate it in themselves. This is what occasions the warfare in all the saints. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and the flesh warreth against the Spirit, and the Spirit warreth against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other. The spirit which is born of the Spirit is the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. But the flesh which is born of the flesh is depraved, earthly, sensual and devilish. If, therefore, the incorruptible seed be implanted in us, it comes in competition with our human depravity, and there is unavoidably a conflict. That life which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, can no more love the corruptions of that life which was given us in the earthly Adam, after it is implanted in us, than before it was so implanted in us. That spiritual life is after God, and God hates sin; hence, when this is implanted in us, we possess in our heart a principle that hates the flesh, because of its pollution and opposition to all that is pure and holy, spiritual and heavenly; not only that of our own individual bodies, but all flesh, father, mother, wife and offspring.

This hatred is manifested in the saints by their loathing and abhorring themselves in dust and ashes. And it makes them at times long and pray to be delivered from the body of this death. This being the case with all who are born of God, they are all so far qualified to be disciples of Christ, but without that heavenly birth, which brings forth in us this new and spiritual life, which hates the flesh, crucifies it with its affections and lusts, none can be truly Christ's disciples. That new and spiritual birth is indispensable to discipleship.

This birth manifests the subjects of it as the children of God and heirs of immortal glory. But discipleship signifies not only that we are born of God, but also that we are taught and led by his Spirit, that we are not only children, but obedient children. Hence Christ adds, "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."

Middletown, N.Y.
February 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 433 - 436

LUKE XVI. 2.

“Give an account of thy stewardship.” – Luke xvi. 2.

WE have been requested to offer some remarks on the words quoted above. These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples, and are a part of one of those parables which he spake, as it was written of him, that he “should open his mouth in parables and utter dark sayings.” The parable from which the words under consideration are copied, is one of a cluster of parables which Jesus took occasion to put forth when the pharisees murmured because he received publicans and sinners, and associated with them; the first three of which were addressed to the murmuring pharisees, viz: The lost sheep with joy returned to the fold; the lost piece of money found, and the prodigal son returned to his father’s house; on each occasion producing great joy instead of murmuring. Next follows the parable of the unjust steward, and this with several in succession were spoken to his disciples in the hearing of the pharisees.

In the preceding parable, the lost sheep, the lost money, and the prodigal son, represented the lost sheep of the house of Israel, unto whom the 1iessiah was sent, and unto whom he sent the primitive pioneers of the doctrine of salvation by grace, including these poor lost publicans and sinners. These were originally a part of Israel, but like the lost sheep had strayed away from the government of the house of David, and become lost sheep; like the piece of money they were lost, and could not be reckoned among the doers of the law, and like the prodigal son, they had been prodigal of their privileges – had spent all, were reduced to poverty, wretchedness, and extreme distress. These parables are given to show that Jesus came to seek and to save that

which was lost. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

In the parable of the steward, we understand the certain rich man to represent the notion of the Jews, or the government of Judah. This portion of Israel had not revolted from, nor become lost to the house of David; but the ten tribes had, like the younger brother, taken their portion and gone into a far country; and at the time our Lord spake this parable, were hired out to a citizen of that country (the Romans) to feed swine, (gather tax from the Jews to support the Roman government) and had wasted their inheritance in Israel, &c. While the revolted tribes were reduced to poverty, the Jews remained in their original estate, as Jews, and boasted that they were rich. The law and the prophets were with them: "They have Moses and the prophets;" the ark and the temple – the priesthood and the service of the worldly sanctuary; and were apparently clothed in purple, and fared sumptuously every day. But this rich man had in his bosom an unjust steward. The character of this steward answered well to the condition of these murmuring pharisees and scribes, who occupied the place of stewards in teaching and expounding the law, and in dealing out to the household those things which were under their charge. But they had acted the part of an unjust steward, and were accused of wasting the goods, (making void the law of God by their own traditions) were accused by Moses in whom they trusted. The day of reckoning had overtaken them, and they were summoned to prepare their accounts, for they could no longer hold the stewardship. Being thus notified to render an account of his stewardship and give up the office, his wisdom, not his honesty, was commended by his lord; for like the scribes and pharisees, whom he represented, he was an unjust steward, and his course in making prevision for himself by defrauding his lord, was well calculated to illustrate the wisdom of the scribes and pharisees, in regard

to those who are debtors to the law. As the unjust steward said unto that debtor who owed his lord a hundred measures of oil, Take thy bill and sit down quickly and write fifty, and to him that was indebted a hundred measures of wheat, write four-score, so these scribes had dealt with the debtors to the law, requiring them to be very exact in minor matters, tithing of mint, &c., but remitting the weightier matters of the kingdom. Several examples of this kind are given by our Lord; the fol!owing for instance: "Then the pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with unwashed hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Isaiah prophesied of you, hypocrites: as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots, and cups, and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own traditions; for Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother, and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death; but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is corban, that is to say, a gift, by 'whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me: he shall be free, and ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect, through your tradition which ye have delivered; and many such things do ye." – Mark vii. 5-13. But the unjust steward, when about to lose his stewardship, made provision for himself, that when he should be destitute, the debtors of his lord might receive him into favor, and It was in reference to this, that his lord said he had done wisely. The pharisees and scribes were, at the time this parable was spoken, about to be removed from their stewardship, the temple worship to be abolished, and the Jews as a nation to be scattered abroad; and their wisdom was displayed in making friends of the

rulers of the Gentiles and in sending forth their foreign missionaries to make proselytes to their faith, by modifying the requirements of the law and suffering the Gentiles to sit down and write their bill as they saw fit. This ancient order of pharisees and scribes was to give place to a more modern order of their brethren, which extends, we can all witness, down to the present time. Our modern pharisees and scribes are received and largely remunerated by the children of this world, by a corresponding system of craftiness, by accommodating their doctrines to the bills which men have made out for themselves, saying for u hundred measures, fifty, or four-score. Pharisees of the present day who profess to be stewards, or expounders of the law, say for instance to sinners, How much owest thou the law? If the poor debtor reply, I have transgressed the precept, and am under the sentence of death, I owe my life; our modern crafty scribes and pharisees will tell that debtor to set down quickly and alter his bill to the amount which he feels able and willing to pay. If the law demands your life, alter the bill, and make it require only your obedience, or your efforts to obey. If the word of God requires that you shall be slain by the law, and made alive by grace, through the quickening operation of the Holy Ghost, the bill is so altered as to place the whole settlement in the power and inclination of the delinquent. As the ancient stewards made void the law of God by traditions, so do those of our day teach for doctrines the commandments of men, the devices and inventions of men. But as the day of the Lord has overtaken the ancient order of scribes and pharisees, so shall the day of retribution come upon those mockers of the last times, who have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for a reward, and have perished in the gainsayings of Kore, for their judgment now of a long time lingereth not and their damnation slumbereth not.

We can detect but one point of discrepance between the case of the unjust steward and the modern arminian clergy, viz: The steward was ashamed to beg; but his brethren of modern date have with shame shook hands and parted; they in all other respects very correctly copy the traits of the unjust steward; they are equally averse to digging, or laboring with their hands for an honest subsistence; equally artful in scheming, and in handling the word of God deceitfully.

Some have found it difficult to understand the useful lesson of practical instruction which our Lord directed his primitive disciples to learn from this subject, when he commanded them to make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness. He certainly did not direct them to copy the example of the unjust and wicked steward, for that would be in opposition to every principle of true religion. But he told them that the children of this world were, in their generation, wiser than the children of light. They have none of the wisdom that cometh from above, but that wisdom which is peculiar to the children of this world, and which is opposed to the wisdom of God. The wisdom of this world is exemplified in the case of the unjust steward. The children of the kingdom of Christ have no occasion for that kind of wisdom, but still they are exhorted to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. But if they lack wisdom, instead of seeking that which is from beneath, they are directed to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not. By the mammon of unrighteousness, we understand worldly riches, earthly possessions, &c. Some of the disciples of Jesus undoubtedly held some of this kind of mammon, which could be of service to them but a little while at the most, as, in consequence of their profession of faith in Christ, they were cast out of the synagogue, viewed as outlaws, no longer entitled to protection, persecuted and scattered far away from their houses and homes. As freeholders they were

about to fail, and as stewards of good things bestowed on them in providence it was proper that they should make such disposition of their estates before they were confiscated, as should render them availing when they should be driven out by persecution. It is believed that the disciples who sold their possessions after the day of pentecost, and laid the money down at the apostles' feet, acted in accordance with the instruction of this parable, and when they failed, or were reduced to want, poverty and distress, this common fund supplied the poor saints in general.

We certainly are not at liberty to suppose that our Lord commended the dishonesty or injustice of the unjust steward as an example for his disciples to imitate; but rather for them to profit by the lesson of instruction taught in the parable, and make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness by making such disposition of their property, which was subject to confiscation, as to secure a fund out of which the common necessities of the saints should be relieved.

Whether the foregoing views will be satisfactory to our inquiring friend, or to others, we cannot say; but if any have clearer views, let them speak out. What we have written on the subject has been off-hand, and without much time for reflection.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
November 15, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 353 – 358

LUKE XVI. 9.

Worldly riches are the mammon of this world. Whatever of them are possessed by christians, they hold only as stewards in trust, who are under a solemn charge to so use as not to abuse them, and they are amenable to their Lord for the manner of their stewardship. While possessing them in trust, if we impart them with a liberal hand to relieve the necessities of the poor and suffering, when we fail, or in our turn become poor and needy, we may, relying on our Lord's assurance expect to be in the same way ourselves relieved, for what measure we mete out to others, shall be meted to us again. "There is that which scattereth and yet increaseth; but to withhold more than is meet, tendeth to poverty."

Shortly after this parable was spoken, the disciples were driven from their homes, and their property was confiscated, but profiting by the instruction, those of them who had property, while they held an undisputed title, sold it, and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet, and when they failed, they were received and supplied from the common provision thus secured. They had all things in common. (See Acts ii. 44-47). We are not directed by our Lord to make a mammon, or god, of riches, or of what we possess of the world's goods, but make to ourselves friends of it. It can afford us friendly aid in our extremities, and so to use it as to secure the commendation of our Lord, whose stewards only we are, as acting wisely.

Middletown, N. Y.
April 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 216 - 217

LUKE 16:9

Elder Beebe: - Please give your views on Luke 16:9. There is a command given by Christ to make friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness," and when they fail, these receive them "into everlasting habitations." Who are they that are to make friends with the "mammon of unrighteousness"? What are the "everlasting habitations"? You will greatly oblige by giving your views on the above mentioned verse.

Phios,
Port Fear
August, 1863.

Mammon, according to Webster, signifies riches, wealth, or the god of riches, and in this signification the term seems to be used in this text, as also in the sermon on the mount. The unjust steward in the parable had charge, so long as he held the stewardship, of his master's goods, and was empowered legally to appropriate them. He was unjust, first, because he had wasted what he was in duty bound to faithfully take care of, and secondly, in making a fraudulent settlement with his master's debtors; but he manifested commendable wisdom in so using his office while he held it as to secure the permanent friendship of those on whom he was soon to become dependent. We presume this parable, as well as that of the prodigal son, which immediately preceded it, had a primary reference to the Jewish nation, which was very soon to fail, and lose its nationality, and be removed from its special stewardship of the oracles, covenants, worldly sanctuary, carnal ordinances, etc., but the special admonition to the disciples has a much broader application. God has made his children stewards of so much of the riches, or mammon, of this world as lawfully belongs to us, and Paul

says: “Moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” God in his wisdom knows and in his providence commits to us the exact amount of worldly wealth of which it is his pleasure to make us stewards, and it is not wrong for us to hold it in charge, as faithful stewards, to be disbursed by us as his word and Spirit shall dictate. But we are restricted as stewards, and solemnly charged to use these things as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passes away. We really possess nothing independently of God, for the world and the fullness thereof are his, and we ourselves are not our own, we are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.

Now then, as the unjust steward was commended by his lord, in that he acted wisely in disposing of the goods entrusted to him in such a manner as to secure the good will and permanent friendship of those on whom he was so soon to become dependent, so it would have been wise in the Jews to have secured, as far as possible, the friendship of the Gentiles, among whom they were so soon to be dispersed, and on whose favor they were soon to become dependent. And the disciples of Christ should receive from the parable a lesson of wisdom in regard to their stewardship of the riches of this world, and so use the uncertain and transient things of this world as to secure a reciprocity of kindness when they should themselves become poor and destitute. So Jesus taught his disciples on the mount, saying unto them: “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.” (Luke 6:38) Our stewardship over and possession of worldly treasures is brief at the best, but we are liable at any and every moment to fail, or to be deprived of it all, and then to become dependent on the charity of those who have the means to relieve our necessities; therefore, as we would that others should do to

us, we are told to do even so unto them, that when ye fail, when your stewardship of the things of this world shall fail, and yourselves become needy and destitute, your deeds of hospitality will be remembered, and your bread cast on the waters shall be gathered after many days.

Perhaps we have our best illustration of this subject in the course pursued by the saints at Pentecost. The persecution was raging against christianity at that time, and all who confessed their faith in Jesus were liable to lose their property, and we are told that all who had possessions sold them and brought the proceeds and laid them down at the feet of the apostles. “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” (Acts 2:44,45) Thus as their stewardship of their own possessions and goods was to be taken from them, they acted wisely in making provision, while it was their undisputed right to do so, for their future support; that when they failed, or were reduced to dependence, they were received into everlasting or a permanent and reliable home.

We therefore conclude that the mammon of unrighteousness is the wealth or possessions of this world. Mammon not of righteousness, or to those who righteously possess and use them, but mammon of idolatrousness, when unrighteously held, desired or used; that the disciples of Christ were those commanded by him to make to themselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that their failing was when they should be deprived of the treasures of this world, and become dependent; that their reception into everlasting habitation is their being received into permanent homes, after the manner of those disciples at Pentecost.

We have thus briefly answered the several interrogatories of “Philos”. If what we have written shall be of any use to him

and others, we shall have cause for humble gratitude to the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

Before dismissing this subject, we feel constrained to call the attention of the saints to some further considerations having a bearing on this subject. In his sermon on the mount, and in the thirteenth verse of this sixteenth chapter of Luke, Jesus distinctly tells his disciples that they cannot serve God and mammon, and by the repetition of this instruction, almost in the same words, in Matthew 6:24, and Luke 16:13, we may infer its weighty importance, and in order that we may clearly understand and duly obey this divine instruction, and at the same time make to ourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, we must carefully mark the difference between the one and the other. It is one thing to make to ourselves friends of the riches or treasures of this world, and quite another to serve them as idols. If, in the providence of God, we are put in possession of earthly treasures, we would make friends of them, we should use them as not abusing them, knowing that their fashion passeth away. “Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving.” (I Tim. 4:4) Receiving then with thanksgiving is an acknowledgment that we regard them as the gifts of God, for which were are obligated to thank him and to use them in his fear. But to set our affections on the things of the earth, and forego our religious duties and privileges for their acquisition, and make them the paramount object of our pursuit, is to serve them as a mammon, or idol of unrighteousness. Then they cease to be our friends, but become our idols. The loving apostle John in his last admonition said, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” With such an earthly nature as we possess we need the admonition, for we are informed that covetousness is idolatry. Look to this, brethren and sisters. Have you not sometimes been so eager for obtaining riches as to sacrifice

some religious principle for their attainment? Have you at no time absented yourself from the house of prayer, or from some of the solemn feasts of Zion, to serve this mammon? If so, this mammon has, so far, become your master, not your friend; for his servant ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey. Paul charges the saints to avoid the example of Esau, who for a morsel of meat sold his birthright. We have precious birthright privileges in the church of God, which we should not barter away for carnal gratifications, lest we be found servants of the mammon of unrighteousness. Have there not been cases where brethren in comfortable circumstances, and living in the bounds of a gospel church, for the sake of making a little more money, or of accumulating more wealth, have pulled up stakes and moved to some country where they could gain more wealth, but lose all the social privileges of religious society? Do such brethren serve, or make a friend of the mammon of unrighteousness? Brethren, except when compelled by actual want, who relinquish spiritual privileges for worldly gain, forget, or at least neglect, the instruction which Christ gave the disciples in his sermon on the mount: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven; ... for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air," etc. (Matt. 6:19,20,21,24-26) We read also to the end of the chapter. Here we have the commentary of our Lord upon the text, and the text also. We do not understand, however, that our Lord commands his servants to be indolent, neglectful or lazy, for Paul commands

the saints to be diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. Not serving mammon, but the Lord. By serving him as our Master, and making friends of the good things of this world, which, under his blessing, crown our labors, we shall make the discrimination required: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.” These are of the first and highest importance to Christians. “And all these things shall be added unto you.” All these things, such as food and raiment, or whatever our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of. Relying on this gracious promise, trust all consequences to him, only see that he is our supreme Master, and he will make these earthly things our friends.

There are many ways in which the fidelity of Christians is tried as to their choice of masters. The poor, the sick, the destitute, the widow, the orphan, ask for our sympathy. The Saviour says, Give to him that asketh. Mammon says, You had better hold on to what you have, you may need it. Which master will you serve? Can you obey both? Jesus says, and you find the saying true, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

Again, if we would make friends instead of masters of what is called the mammon or god of unrighteousness, we should regard ourselves as stewards of those things, that they occupy a position of equality with us, inasmuch as both we and they are the creatures and property of God, only temporarily entrusted to our stewardship for a trial of our fidelity; both we and they are our Lord’s goods, and if we would have them for our friends, let us so use them that when we fail, or become destitute, those who have shared in our bounty will be ready to reciprocate the favors they have received at our hands. This we will do, not by defrauding our Lord, as the unjust steward did his lord, but by using our stewardship as our Lord has commanded us, by holding all

his goods as only entrusted to us, and at all times subject to his order.

Middletown, N.Y.
September 15, 1863.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 404 – 409

LUKE XVII. 1, 2.

“Then said he unto the disciples. It is impossible but that offenses will come: but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.”

These words were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ, and addressed, as our text reads to the disciples. The time when they were spoken, is indicated by these words, “Then said he,” &c., it was, as we infer from the preceding connection, immediately after he had spoken to them in parables, in the presence of the pharisees, of the unjust steward, for which the pharisees derided him; and after a direct rebuke to them, he also spake of the rich man and the beggar. Having uttered these sayings, and spoken the parables which are recorded in the sixteenth chapter, “Then said he unto the disciples,” &c. All that was said by our Lord must be full of interest to his people; but especially those things which he said to his disciples. He said many things to them by way of instruction, encouragement and admonition, but nothing unnecessarily. There is a weighty importance in every word that fell from his lips, and he has informed them that they who heard his sayings and kept them, were like a man who built his house upon a rock, which could not be moved because it was built upon a rock.

From the application which he made of the words of our text, and the instruction and admonitions which are recorded in the succeeding part of this chapter, we conclude that he spake of offenses that should come among them as his disciples, and not only in the time of those who were personally addressed, but unto his disciples in all the subsequent ages of the church, down to the end of her

militant state. That offenses should certainly come, and in a manner that would offend some of his little ones, is expressly declared, but the source from whence they should come is not stated in the text. Elsewhere in the Scriptures we are informed of the exposure of the saints, from the world, the flesh, and from the devil. “Woe unto the world because of offenses.” “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but I have called you out of the world. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. The apostle has said, and every christian has a witness of the truth of his words, “The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Satan goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He desired to have Peter, that he might sift him as wheat, and we have reason to know that he also desires to tempt, annoy and perplex the family of God as far as he may be permitted. Many offenses from the powers of darkness were, at the very time that the words of our text were spoken, just ready to break forth upon the little flock of our Redeemer. They were not only to witness the derisions and reproaches which the pharisees were belching forth on their beloved Lord and Master, the treachery of Judas, and the final sufferings and crucifixion of the Redeemer, from their wicked hands, but they were themselves shortly to be scattered abroad, and by the violence of persecution to be driven into strange cities, that they might go everywhere preaching the word. The man of sin, that wicked man whose coming is after the working of Satan, was also to be revealed in his time, when the *let,* by which he was then in that form restrained, should be removed, and he should come with signs and lying wonders; with all deceivableness and unrighteousness, &c. The development of antichrist, in all its beastly forms of dragon heads and monster horns, should drench the earth with the blood of the saints. But besides all the offenses and opposition which the saints were admonished to expect from

without, they were to experience offenses among themselves. These disciples to whom the words of the text were spoken, as we see by what is said in the fifth verse, were the twelve apostles, and Judas was still among them, and numbered with them, and special allusion was had to him, in the words, “but woe unto him by whom the offense cometh.” This was clearly realized in the night in which our Lord was betrayed, when Judas came with a band of armed men, to deliver him into their hands. The fearful end of Judas, shows that it were better for him to have a millstone attached to his neck, and be plunged into the sea; for without tracing him after his death to his own place, where he went, his suicide, and the manner of his death was even more shocking than would have been a death by drowning in the sea. But it is not our privilege to say that all offenses were to cease among the disciples even after Judas had performed his dreadful work. Paul, in his address to the elders at Ephesus, said he knew that after his departure, grievous wolves should enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and said he, “Even of your ownselves shall men rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” The very rule of gospel order laid down as the law of his kingdom, in the third and fourth verses of this chapter, and immediately following our text, as well as the rule of discipline given in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, shows that offenses should come among brethren. Hence the solemn charge, Take heed to yourselves. If they were secure from danger of offending one another, why this admonition? If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day and turn again unto thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. Not only the primitive disciples, but the saints in all ages have great reason to heed this admonition to forgive their penitent brother, otherwise they become themselves offenders, and may offend some of Christ’s little ones. It is not enough when we feel perfectly

satisfied that their turning and repentance is honest, sincere and genuine; but if seven times in a day he offend, and as many times in a day turns to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. This lesson is solemnly enforced by the divine Master, when he taught his disciples to pray, saying, “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.” For, said he to them, If ye do not from the heart forgive them that trespass against thee, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you. And the inspired apostle exhorts the church of God to be kindly affectionate one towards another, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake had forgiven them. The children of God possess a carnal nature that requires to be closely watched, it is predisposed to resent injuries, and would seize a debtor by the throat, and say, “Pay me that thou owest,” and even when the debtor entreats, saying, Have patience, and I will pay thee all, will not relent, but thrusts him into prison. O, may the disciples of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, take heed to themselves. It is impossible but offenses will come. Ah! in a variety of ways. They may be introduced by false brethren who come in unawares, to spy out our liberties. And we are commanded to “Beware of men who come unto us in sheep’s clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves.” But how shall we know such, that we may distinguish between them and those whom we are commanded to forgive? By their fruits ye shall know them. Their ministry never builds up the saints in their most holy faith; never feeds the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. Where the evidence has been clearly given that a brother or a sister has passed from death unto life, if he or she be overtaken in a fault, (whatever that fault may be,) ye that are spiritual, are commanded to restore such an one, in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. - Gal. vi. 1, 2.

“But woe unto him by whom they come.” If the offense comes from an enemy, woe unto him; for, “The enemies of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them.” And if this offense comes through a tempted child of God, there still is a woe, bitterness, sorrow and anguish of heart, more to be dreaded than to be drowned in the sea. Their transgressions shall be visited with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes, but the Lord says, “Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.” - Psalm lxxxix. 31-33.

Seeing then that offenses must needs come, and that all the children of God are exposed to trials and temptations, while here below, how important it is that we should watch and be sober; that we should put on, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another. If any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. Seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. But if we bite and devour one another, take heed lest we be consumed one of another.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 1, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 222 - 226

LUKE 17:12-17

Brother Beebe: Please give your views on Luke xvii. 12-17.

JOHN CORNELISON

Reply: The passage referred to is an account of the miraculous cleansing and healing of ten lepers. This gracious display of His divine power appears to have been made in a certain village of Samaria and one of the lepers which was healed was a Samaritan; the others may have all been Jews, and probably were. The leprosy was a very loathsome and infectious disease which was known in that eastern country, and which we are informed by travelers still exists in that part of the world. This disease is sometimes used as a figure of the pollution and loathsomeness of sin; especially when the quickened sinner is awakened to a sense of his guilty state as a transgressor of the law of God, he is like the lepers in our text, made to feel that they are polluted, unclean and loathsome, and that their only hope for deliverance is in the Lord Jesus Christ; that no human power can cleanse them; that they cannot cleanse themselves, but, like another leper of whom we read, they do believe that if Jesus will, he can cleanse them. But the anxious enquiry with them is, Will he? This is the last hope, if he will not, then I must die in my pollution, for vain is the help of man. Lepers were not allowed to mingle with the congregation of Israel; the law pronounced them unclean, and banished them from the camp. So the poor sinner, when he feels his malady, sees himself condemned by the law, and forbidden to mingle with the people of God. The ten stood afar off and cried to Jesus for mercy. Their uncleanness forbid that they should approach the Savior, like the convicted sinner, who feels in deed that he is very far from Jesus, far from mercy; yet from dire necessity they cry, they cannot refrain, as there is no

possibility of deliverance from any other source, or any other way. Therefore they cry, “Oh Jesus, if thou wilt, thou canst cleanse me!” Or, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us”. In answer to the piteous cry of the ten lepers, Jesus commanded them to go and show themselves to the priest. This was in obedience to the ceremonial law. The priest was to judge and decide all cases of leprosy among the children of Israel, according to the thirteenth chapter of Leviticus. Therefore, they were sent to shew themselves to the priest. And so when Jesus cleanseth a poor guilt-stricken sinner from the defilement of sin, he bids him shew himself to the priest, or legal judge. The law examines him, and as the blood of Christ has cleansed him from all guilt, the law can no longer shut him up in despair, or hold him guilty. The cure is perfect. But a righteousness that will not meet the vigorous demands of the law of God can do the sinner no good. The righteousness of the law must be fulfilled in us, according to Rom. Viii. 1-4.

In our text, ten lepers were cleansed, but only one returned to give glory to God. The cure of leprosy in the flesh could be, and probably was often effected without effecting a deliverance from the leprosy of sin. This may have been the case with the nine who returned not to give glory to God. But the Samaritan was a subject of saving faith. Jesus said to him, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” We are not informed whether the nine had any faith, except that natural faith which led them to believe that Jesus could cure their leprosy. The Samaritans were despised by the Jews, and were by regarded as abandoned characters, and less entitled to e favor of God than themselves. But Jesus often reproved

them the selfrighteousness of the Jews, as in this case; the one who returned with gratitude to the Savior was distinguished as a Samaritan.

There are many who sometimes appear to us to be deeply sensible of their lost and perishing state as sinners, and who profess to experience a deliverance from their burden, and to rejoice in Christ as their Savior, who never return to give God the glory of their deliverance, by espousing his cause, taking on them his yoke, and following them in the order and ordinances of his kingdom. May not the same enquiry be made concerning them? Were there not ten cleansed; but where are the nine? We cannot tell where they are, because we are not informed. Whether they are really subjects of saving grace, and living in disobedience or ingratitude, or whether their fleshly natures only have been affected. “If ye love me”, saith Jesus, “keep my commandments”

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1861

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 506 - 508

LUKE 17:12-17

Brother Beebe: Please give your views on Luke xvii. 12-17.

JOHN CORNELISON

Reply: The passage referred to is an account of the miraculous cleansing and healing of ten lepers. This gracious display of His divine power appears to have been made in a certain village of Samaria and one of the lepers which was healed was a Samaritan; the others may have all been Jews, and probably were. The leprosy was a very loathsome and infectious disease which was known in that eastern country, and which we are informed by travelers still exists in that part of the world. This disease is sometimes used as a figure of the pollution and loathsomeness of sin; especially when the quickened sinner is awakened to a sense of his guilty state as a transgressor of the law of God, he is like the lepers in our text, made to feel that they are polluted, unclean and loathsome, and that their only hope for deliverance is in the Lord Jesus Christ; that no human power can cleanse them; that they cannot cleanse themselves, but, like another leper of whom we read, they do believe that if Jesus will, he can cleanse them. But the anxious enquiry with them is, Will he? This is the last hope, if he will not, then I must die in my pollution, for vain is the help of man. Lepers were not allowed to mingle with the congregation of Israel; the law pronounced them unclean, and banished them from the camp. So the poor sinner, when he feels his malady, sees himself condemned by the law, and forbidden to mingle with the people of God. The ten stood afar off and cried to Jesus for mercy. Their uncleanness forbid that they should approach the Savior, like the convicted sinner, who feels in deed that he is very far from Jesus, far from mercy; yet from dire necessity they cry, they cannot refrain, as there is no

possibility of deliverance from any other source, or any other way. Therefore they cry, “Oh Jesus, if thou wilt, thou canst cleanse me!” Or, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us”. In answer to the piteous cry of the ten lepers, Jesus commanded them to go and show themselves to the priest. This was in obedience to the ceremonial law. The priest was to judge and decide all cases of leprosy among the children of Israel, according to the thirteenth chapter of Leviticus. Therefore, they were sent to shew themselves to the priest. And so when Jesus cleanseth a poor guilt-stricken sinner from the defilement of sin, he bids him shew himself to the priest, or legal judge. The law examines him, and as the blood of Christ has cleansed him from all guilt, the law can no longer shut him up in despair, or hold him guilty. The cure is perfect. But a righteousness that will not meet the vigorous demands of the law of God can do the sinner no good. The righteousness of the law must be fulfilled in us, according to Rom. Viii. 1-4.

In our text, ten lepers were cleansed, but only one returned to give glory to God. The cure of leprosy in the flesh could be, and probably was often effected without effecting a deliverance from the leprosy of sin. This may have been the case with the nine who returned not to give glory to God. But the Samaritan was a subject of saving faith. Jesus said to him, “Thy faith hath made thee whole.” We are not informed whether the nine had any faith, except that natural faith which led them to believe that Jesus could cure their leprosy. The Samaritans were despised by the Jews, and were by regarded as abandoned characters, and less entitled to e favor of God than themselves. But Jesus often reproved

them the selfrighteousness of the Jews, as in this case; the one who returned with gratitude to the Savior was distinguished as a Samaritan.

There are many who sometimes appear to us to be deeply sensible of their lost and perishing state as sinners, and who profess to experience a deliverance from their burden, and to rejoice in Christ as their Savior, who never return to give God the glory of their deliverance, by espousing his cause, taking on them his yoke, and following them in the order and ordinances of his kingdom. May not the same enquiry be made concerning them? Were there not ten cleansed; but where are the nine? We cannot tell where they are, because we are not informed. Whether they are really subjects of saving grace, and living in disobedience or ingratitude, or whether their fleshly natures only have been affected. “If ye love me”, saith Jesus, “keep my commandments”

Middletown, N. Y.
June 1, 1861

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 506 - 508

LUKE XVII. 13-20.

Brother Beebe: In a former letter I requested your views through the SIGNS on Luke xvii. 13-20, concerning the "ten lepers," and I still request your views on the same.

JAMES SHOWS.
Ellisville, Miss., July 18, 1859.

Reply: Our brethren should bear in mind that we are constantly receiving calls for our views on various portions of the Scriptures, and if we were competent to explain them all, it would require more time and space than we can command. But the truth is, we are not competent; we are as dependent for every ray of divine light as any of our brethren or sisters can be. Still, we do feel disposed to do the very best we can, and when called on, if we have any light on the subject presented we take great delight in offering it; but when queries are sent to us, and we do not reply, let it be fully understood that it is because we have no satisfactory light on the subject; but we never decline from neglect or want of respect for those who call on us.

In the subject of the ten lepers and their being cleaned, we discover one of the numerous demonstrations of the goodness, power and Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ. When in his incarnation he dwelt among us, he went about doing good, healing the sick, raising the dead and casting out devils, yet bearing the reproaches of a wicked and gainsaying world. In all his wonderful works, in all his mercies performed, our faith may discern important lessons, not only of his goodness and power, but also of admonition and instruction for our special benefit. For instance, these lepers represent the loathsome and incurable disease of sin and pollution by which we were defiled, and which like the leprosy under the ceremonial law, shuts us out from the

privilege of mingling with the congregation of the Lord. No human power or skill could cure us. Our condition was wretched and hopeless, until Jesus, the great Physician, revealed himself and took us in hand. He spake the word, and it stood fast; he commanded, and we were made whole. The power and grace of God our Savior is wonderful indeed in cleansing us from the leprosy of sin and guilt, and we are made to rejoice in the efficacy of his blood to cleanse and his righteousness to justify us. But in this case there were ten lepers cleansed, and but one of them returned to give God the glory. How very apt we are to forget the obligations of love and gratitude to God that we are under for his amazing goodness and grace displayed in our salvation. It is true the ten were all perfectly cured of their leprosy, whether they were quickened by the Holy Spirit and born of God at the same time or not; it would certainly appear from the saving faith in Christ possessed by the one who returned, that he was indeed a subject of the new birth; but of the others we are not positively informed of their having received more than a temporal cure. But it is certain that those who are cured of the defilement of sin, are all born of God, and shall eventually return to give glory to him. Yet it is to be feared that there are many, and, if we are not greatly mistaken, a very great many who have witnessed the healing efficacy of the Savior’s blood, who have been delivered by him from their burden of sin and guilt, and have been made to rejoice in him as their precious Savior, who have never returned in any public manner to give him glory, by declaring in Zion what he has done for their souls, or by publicly owning him in the ordinance of baptism, or by uniting with his disciples in the fellowship of the gospel. To all such delinquents what must be the reproof of his interrogation, “Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine?” Can it be supposed that all who have received an evidence of his saving power and grace, have owned their allegiance to him as their Lord and Master, by obedience to his commands?

And in our solemn assemblies, when a few, and but a few, of those who profess to love the Lord, are found in their seats, may not the inquiry be made, Where are the nine? or where are those whose vacant seats occasion sadness to the few who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together? And, in many other applications of these words, may we contemplate them with propriety and profit.

Middletown, N.Y.
August 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 257 - 258

LUKE XX. 25.

“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar’s, and unto God the things which be God’s.”

When the Redeemer was in the flesh, wicked men and devils united all their skill to tempt him to commit himself in some way that might afford them opportunity to accuse him of some impropriety. In connection with the account of his baptism, we are informed of his being led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, and the various modes of attack made on him at that time by the prince of darkness, and his triumphant victory over the tempter, is also recorded for our consolation and instruction. Not only was he assailed directly by Satan, but also by wicked men, and in every way that their ingenuity could invent, but all their assaults were unsuccessful. Though he was tempted in all points as his children are, yet he was without sin. In no instance was he overcome by the temptations presented. How consoling it is to his dear, trembling disciples to know that we have a High Priest who is easily touched with the feelings of our infirmities, and one that knows how to succor them that are tempted, from his own personal experience. How full of important instruction to us is the account given of his manner of meeting and vanquishing his tempters, for in his manner he has given us an example, in which we are to follow him. These things which were done in the green tree, were and are to be repeated in the dry tree. They who persecuted and reviled the Master of his house, would do likewise unto those who are of his household. The same spirit of opposition to Christ, his cause, his doctrine, people and institutions, is still abroad in the world, and actively engaged in spreading the pathway of the christian traveler with gins and snares, and they are therefore admonished to be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves.

Among the many schemes which were laid to tempt and ensnare our Redeemer, was the one which gave occasion for the utterance of the words which we have placed at the head of this article. His enemies had understood that Christ came as the promised Messiah, and that he intended to set up his kingdom in the world. Like all the carnal religionists, they knew of no kingdoms but such as are of this world, and this device was, in their carnal judgment, calculated to draw him out to say something against submitting tamely to the burdens which were imposed on the Jews by the Romans. At all events, it was natural to conclude that he would be in a dilemma in answering their question, and deciding whether it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar or not, he would either say something which they could construe into treason against the Roman government, or if he decided in favor of the demands of Caesar, he would equally offend the Jews. But Jesus perceived their hypocrisy, and demanded of his tempters that they should shew him the tribute money; and when they had done so he demanded, Whose image and superscription the tribute money bore? and they said to him, Caesar's, and he said to them in the words of our text, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's." With this reply they were confounded: "They could not take hold of his words before the people; and they marveled at his answer, and held their peace."

In this example we have not only an instance of the wicked designs of his enemies to tempt him, and of his putting them to silence, but we have an important lesson for the instruction of his disciples, in reference to the position which they occupy in this world in reference to the governments of the world. As his disciples, or as subjects of that kingdom which is not of this world, they are to deport themselves according to the maxim presented in the words, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto

God the things which be God's." Several things should be prayerfully contemplated in order that we understandingly comply with this divinely established rule.

1. What we are to understand by the proprietorships implied in the text.
2. Our connection with the two distinct governments, and
3. Our duty to render to both, such duties as are incumbent on us, in the relation which we bear to each respectively.

First. We are not to understand that there is any part of the universe that does not properly belong to God, as the creator, upholder and righteous disposer of all things. The heavens, earth and seas, with all they contain, belong to the Lord. The earth and all the fullness thereof are the Lord's. Heaven is his throne, and the earth is his footstool. It cannot therefore be in this sense that our Lord speaks of things as belonging to Caesar. But his words in this case have reference to the distinction he has made between temporal and spiritual governments. We are informed that whatever powers there be, are of God, and to resist the powers that be, is to resist an ordinance of God. All temporal governments exist by his permission. There are no powers that are not of God. By his providence nations and kingdoms are ushered into existence, and when they have accomplished his pleasure, they crumble again to dust. This is not only true in relation to the civil, social and political governments of states, nations and empire, but also of families, tribes and all other forms of human government. In this view of the subject, whatever power he has vested in Caesar, in kings, chiefs, patriarchs, parents, masters, or magistrates, all being by him ordained, exist without any restriction or disparagement of that government which he exclusively holds in his own sovereign hands. But we are to bear in mind that God has reserved in his own hand the exclusive government of his creatures, in all matters relating

to their spiritual and eternal welfare. He has vested in no earthly king or magistrate a right to govern the consciences of men, or to regulate their religious faith or worship; in all these things they stand immediately amendable to him alone. Hence the peculiar nature of the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is distinct from, and altogether unlike to any of the earthly kingdoms or governments under heaven.

Second. Our connection with these two governments, which are distinct in their nature, object and design. We take the department of Caesar, to represent all human governments, in distinction from the divine, providential government of God, and distinct also from the spiritual mediatorial government of our Lord Jesus Christ as the King of saints. Of these, the first form after the creation, was patriarchal fathers of families and of tribes, gave laws to their descendants which were binding on them, and by the special enactment of God, children are throughout all time commanded to honor and obey their parents. In connection with this, the relationship of husbands and wives, masters and servants, &c., and the relative obligations binding on them severally. Then came regal governments, which were first generally established among the heathen nations, and afterwards the theocratical government of Israel, which was binding on that people throughout their generations, notwithstanding their wicked desire for kings, which God granted, as a righteous judgment upon them. Among the Gentiles many other forms of human government have been instituted, among which, as unquestionably the most perfect and equitable, is the republican form, as enjoyed in our own favored country since the Revolution. As citizens of the world, and as members of the human family, we are connected with such of these forms as exist in those parts of the universe where God in his providence, has cast our lot. If under a patriarchal, theocratical, monarichal or representative

government, we are bound to respect and submit to such peculiar form as God has providentially placed us under. We are all, as the creatures of God, necessarily under his providential government, subject to his decrees and naturally obliged to honor and obey him as the supreme Ruler of the universe, and to render him those things which belong to him, and which he requires at our hands as its creatures.

The government of the kingdom of Christ is spiritual, and none but spiritual or regenerated subjects can participate in its provisions. Except a man be born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into it; consequently none other can come under his laws, or be the subjects of its peculiar government.

Third. Our obligation to respect, honor and obey, the government we are under. Christians, while here in the flesh, have to do with the world, and have an interest in common with all other men in the governments of this world. This heavenly calling does not release them from the obligation to obey the powers that be, which are ordained of God. If children, they are not released from the obligation to obey their parents. Servants are exhorted by divine authority to be obedient to their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior, in all things. (Titus ii. 9, 10.) And again, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is

proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself." - 1 Tim. vi. 1-5. Our allegiance to Christ, as his loyal subjects, dissolves no relation which we naturally sustain. The relationship of parents and children, husbands and wives, masters and servants, magistrates and people, kings and subjects, with all their obligations, continue equally binding on us, who are subjects of Christ's government, and members of the household of faith, as on other men. Therefore, in rendering to Caesar the things which be Caesar's, we must discharge all these obligations faithfully, cheerfully and honestly, as in the fear of the Lord.

Christians, in these United States, are providentially placed under a representative form of civil government, but though we are, in common with other men, represented in, and responsible for the laws which are made, we are severally bound to be in subjection as good citizens. The tribute due from us for the support of our institutions, bears the superscription of Caesar, or of human government, and Christ commands us to render it accordingly. We pay tributes in various ways: by direct and indirect taxes, for revenue to sustain the government, and also it is required of us, not because we are christians, but as citizens, to pay tribute, or contribute to the support of our government, by casting our votes for such men to legislate and administer the government, as we honestly believe are the best qualified, and most reliable for that purpose. These things belong to Caesar, and christians, as well as all other citizens, are commanded to render them.

Here we wish to drop a word of admonition to our brethren. The present is a time of much excitement in the political world, and brethren should not allow themselves to become

unduly excited, nor should they attempt to lord it over the judgment of one another. Let each brother, as a citizen of our great commonwealth, act in this matter according to his best judgment, and when he has done so, let there be no strife, nor hard feelings engendered, because one may honestly differ in his judgment from another, in regard to the competency of men, or the wisdom of measures which may be involved.

Kingcraft and priestcraft are to be equally avoided. In no way can churches or States be more vitally corrupted, than for the church, as such, to attempt to supervise the civil affairs of the State, or for human legislators or magistrates to interfere with the regulations of the church of God. Let these things be kept in their proper place, and if we would enjoy peace and prosperity as christians, and as citizens of the world, let us, in the fear of the Lord, discriminate between the things which be Caesar's, and the things which be God's, and according to the best ability which God has given us, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."

In the foregoing remarks we have endeavored to present the instructions of the Scripture, in regard to responsibilities which rest on us, and which we are commanded and exhorted to faithfully discharge; and we have studiously avoided saying anything to bear upon any political party. We only wish our brethren in discharging their duties to God and to man, to remember the instructions which are given us in his word, and especially so that no commotion in the affairs of the world may be allowed to disturb the christian fellowship of the children of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Whatever may be the future destiny of the cherished institutions of our beloved country, we have the blessed assurance that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and we know that "all things work together for good, to them that

love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 352 - 358

LUKE XXI. 24; ROMANS XI. 25.

Although deeply conscious of our inability to give a full and satisfactory solution of the subject proposed, we will not withhold from our readers such views as we have. The passages proposed read thus, “And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.” “For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.”

The part of the subject more particularly to be considered is, “the fullness of the Gentiles,” &c. We presume that the two passages relate to the same things. The first is in the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and was spoken in connection with solemn predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews. The other is spoken by Paul in connection with his admonition to the Gentile church, in which he uses the figure of the true olive tree, as representing Abraham and his seed, and the wild olive as representing the Gentiles. The natural branches, which represent the natural or fleshly children of Abraham, were broken off, and Gentiles of the wild olive are grafted into the true olive tree. In Luke xxi. 24, our Lord predicted this breaking off of the natural branches, and intimates also the purpose of God in regard to the gathering in of the Gentiles. And in the same connection, verse 32, told them that that generation should not pass away until these things should be fulfilled. That is, as we understand, some that were then living of that generation should live to witness the truth of his

prediction, the destruction of the temple, and of Jerusalem, and the scattering of the Jews, and also the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory; and in verse 31, When ye shall see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is at hand. All these signs, or many of them, had been developed when Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans. On the day of Pentecost, Christ appeared in a cloud, with power and great glory; and immediately thereafter the gospel was preached unto the Gentiles, and Paul was himself especially commissioned to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the church at Rome was among those Gentiles who should be taken from the wild olive, and grafted into the true olive. Hence Paul was a faithful witness of the fulfillment of the Savior's words.

As the natural branches of the true olive, or natural descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, the carnal Jews had been hitherto recognized under the old covenant dispensation, and were partakers of all the privileges of the family tree, which distinguished them nationally and ceremonially from the Gentiles, until the middle wall of partition was thrown down, their temple-worship and daily sacrifices abolished, and they, as a nation, scattered to the four winds of heaven, and intermingled with the Gentile nations of the earth. Then were they broken off from the true olive, and the Gentile converts to the christian faith were brought in. From that time, "he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." - Rom. ii. 28, 29. "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." - Gal. iii. 29. From what we have presented, it will be seen that Abraham, whom God has made the father of the faithful, in the figure, is brought to

view by Paul, as the good olive tree, and the natural, fleshly children of Abraham are the natural branches of that tree, which were broken off. This is according to Rem. ix. 6-8, “Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel which are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” Thus we see that the children of the flesh, as natural branches of Abraham, are broken off, and the children of the promise are grafted in from among the Gentiles. As in the allegory, Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond maid, and the other by a free woman. He that was of the bond woman was born after the flesh, perfectly according to nature. But he that was born of the free woman, was by the special promise of God, and every way contrary to nature. But the son which was born after the flesh and according to the common laws of nature, was cast out, or broken off, because he could not be heir with the child of promise. Now, says Paul, the children of the promise are counted for the seed; consequently, they which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God. The same apostle says to the Gentile saints in the churches of Galatia, “Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.” “So then brethren, we are not children of the bond woman, but of the free. - Gal. iv. 28, 31.

We will now pass to consider that part of our subject named in Luke, “Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”; and in Romans, “Until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in.

As the first of these expressions relates to times, and the other to seed, we will consider them separately, and in their order. We have shown that God had a people among the Gentiles which were to be brought in; which must come from

the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and set down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and the natural children cast out; so for every purpose of God there is an appointed time for its fulfillment. When Isaac, the promised seed and heir of Abraham, was to supersede Ishmael in Abraham's family, this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." - Rom. ix. 9. That promise could not be fulfilled before its time. The impatience of Sarah and Abraham, no more than their efforts, could hasten the fulfillment of the promise. Neither could the time of the bringing in of the Gentiles be anticipated. The law and the prophets must continue until John; and the sceptre must remain with Judah, and the lawgiver between his feet, until Shiloh came. But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, &c. This gathering of the Gentiles must be preceded by the coming of Christ; for it was unto him the gathering of the people should be. He should gather them with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. He should say unto "the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name; for I have created him for my glory." When Christ sent out the seventy, the time for bringing in the Gentiles was at hand, but was not yet fully come; for the natural branches were not yet broken off; the middle wall of partition was not yet thrown down; the handwriting of ordinances were not yet blotted out; the enmity, even the law of commandments, which were against the Gentiles, was not yet nailed to his cross; therefore, the seventy were forbidden to go in the way of the Gentiles, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And when the commission was given to the apostles to go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, they were instructed to tarry in Jerusalem until they were indued with power from on high. But when the day of Pentecost was fully

come, that power for which they had been commanded to wait, came down from heaven upon them like a mighty rushing wind; and immediately they were heard in all the languages common on earth, preaching the gospel to every creature; and they of the nations of the earth did testify that they heard, in their mother tongue in which they were born, the wonderful works of God. Here commenced the times of the Gentiles; and these times must continue until all the children of promise among the Gentiles shall be gathered into the kingdom of God. “Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he had purposed in himself: that in the dispensation of the fullness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” - Eph. i. 9-11. The times then of the Gentiles to be fulfilled, extends to the end of the world, and to the accomplishment of his purpose and grace in their complete ingathering into the kingdom of our Lord.

The fullness in the other text has reference to the people - the children of God which are ordained unto salvation among the Gentiles. The children of promise of all nations and kindreds on the earth. “For [said Peter] the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off; even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” This fullness is past the power of human computation; a company which no man can number, redeemed out of every tribe and kindred under heaven, and sealed with the seal of God. The fullness of them cannot be diminished—they must all be brought in; and the text implies that they shall all be gathered, for if but one should be left out, the fullness would not be complete. It is the will of the Father, that of all that he has given to Christ he shall lose nothing. And it is the will of Christ, that all that the

Father has given him shall be with him where he is, that they may behold his glory. No less than the fullness will satisfy the Father or the Son; the fullness of him that filleth all in all; the fullness of his body, over which he presides in all things, as their Head. The fullness of his body, of course, includes all the spiritual seed, both Jews and Gentiles. That portion of them which are called from the Gentiles, were referred to by our Lord when he said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: [the Jewish fold,] them also I must bring, *** and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd."

The apostle shows that in this display of the sovereign goodness of God, boasting is altogether excluded. Of this he would not have the Gentile converts ignorant: that blindness, in part, has happened to Israel, till the fullness of the Gentiles be come in, lest we should be wise in our own conceits. The blindness of the Jews led them to reject the Messiah, and they could not enter into the gospel rest because of unbelief; for as none but those who are born of God can possess that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit and the gift of God, so neither can any enter into his rest without that faith. All unbelievers are in a state of blindness, and are cut off; for without faith it is impossible to please God. This blindness was manifested by the Jews when Paul addressed them in these words: "Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." - Acts xiii. 40, 41, 46, 47. And again, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by

Elias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." - Acts xxviii. 25-28. Thus we see that it was the purpose of God to withhold the light of the truth from the Jews, and execute on them the judgments long foretold, and in the meantime to send the gospel to the Gentiles. Therefore the Gentiles have not whereof to boast; but they have great cause to be humble. We do not stand by our wisdom, or on the ground of any creature excellency in which we excel the Jews. Only so far as we are subjects of God's distinguishing grace are we in possession of the faith of God's elect, and grafted in the true olive; and such of the Jews as continue not in unbelief shall also be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. And all his chosen and redeemed people, both Jews and Gentiles, shall be finally brought in; and so all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

Some have entertained the sentiment that after the Gentiles have been called by grace, and brought into the kingdom of Christ, the Jews are to be restored to their nationality, rebuild Jerusalem, re-establish the temple service, &c.; but we shall not attempt in this article to discuss the subject. We will only say, that we are unable to find anything in the Scriptures to sustain that opinion. As the old covenant dispensation has passed away and is forever abolished, all the Jews who are brought in must be brought in in the same way, under the same covenant, and with the same circumcision as the

Gentiles. The gospel, and not the law, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; unto the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.

Middletown, N. Y.
November 1, 1856.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 392 - 398

LUKE 24:25,26.

Reply to our friend Isaac Stewart. Continued from our last number.

"Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Luke 24:25,26.

These words were spoken by our risen Savior immediately after his resurrection from the dead, to two of his disciples who, although they had heard a report that he was risen, still lacked a satisfactory evidence that the joy-inspiring assertion was true; for they still were communing in sadness on the subject of his sufferings and death. They were disciples of Jesus, and were by him recognized as such, and if their natural faculties had been made spiritual by their new birth, it is safe to suppose their hearts would not have been so slow to accredit the testimony of the witnesses who had announced his resurrection, or the testimony of the prophets, and the words which Christ had himself spoken to them before his crucifixion, in which he said he would rise from the dead on the third day. It seems to us, if their faculties had come by a spiritual birth directly from God, their recollection would have been less treacherous, and their hearts less foolish; still there was in them a spiritual vitality, burning in their hearts, while he talked with them by the way; although the natural faculty of seeing was strangely defective. That they were both of them subjects of saving grace, possessing in them an inner man that was born of God, is clear from the very fact that they were sad at the events which pleased wicked men and devils, and that their hearts could burn while Jesus expounded to them the Scriptures. We cannot admit the theory that they were in their new birth only begotten to

a false or delusive hope, and that their sadness arose from a disappointment of their expectation that Jesus was to have delivered Israel from the Roman yoke, and advance them to political independence. We firmly believe they were by their new and spiritual birth born of God, made partakers of the divine nature, and had received the faith of the Son of God, so that, having in them the mind of Christ, with it they served the law of God, while with their flesh they served the law of sin.

Indeed we are unable to perceive any difference between the condition of these two disciples, experimentally, and the disciples of later times. If we are not altogether mistaken, there is in all the saints a principle of spiritual life that is begotten and born of God, which feeds on every word that proceeds from the mouth of God, and that kindles to a burning flame of light, love and joy, when Jesus communes with them by the way, even when their natural eyes are holden, and all their natural faculties are as closely holden from perceiving that it is Jesus who thus communes with them, as were the eyes of these two disciples. The spouse of Christ is heard to say, I sleep, but my heart awaketh; it is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh. All our natural faculties may be locked in unconscious slumber or stupefied, while at the seat of vitality in the new heart, the voice is heard, recognized, and its awakening animation confessed. The Old Testament saints could say in truth, “Verily thou art a God that hideth thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior.” God himself, by his Spirit, shines in the hearts of his saints, to give them the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ. But although this heavenly light shines in us, the darkness of our natural minds comprehends it not.

We do not understand our Lord as applying his words to the two disciples, in a reproachful way, nor as charging them with idiocy in regard to their natural faculties, or intelligence,

nor does he use words to them which may not be with equal propriety applied to us. No idiot can be more slow to comprehend the things of nature than the Christian's natural intellect or reason is to comprehend the things which God is pleased to reveal to the faith of his spiritual children.

Before we condemn these two disciples, as requiring to be again begotten and born in order to be wise, or to have a good and vital hope of immortality, let us enquire if we are not all of us as great fools as they were, and as slow to believe all that the prophets have written. Let us take our Bible and sit down and read all that the prophets have said or written, and tax our intellectual faculties to unseal their spirituality to our understanding, and if we do not convince ourselves that we are fools and slow of heart to believe, comprehend and understand them, it will be simply because we are not Christians. As successfully may we search for the sun at midnight, with a penny taper, as to search for the sublime spiritualities of the Scriptures by the light of our natural reason, with all the commentaries and expositions of the learned doctors who set themselves up as teachers of divinity. Not one of all the heaven-born heirs of glory has ever received the first correct understanding of the things of the Spirit, until they had first became fools, that they might be wise. The wisdom of the world is earthly, sensual and devilish, but that wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Pure from its fountain in heaven there is nothing deceptive in it, for it is Christ, who of God is made unto us [his children, the children of wisdom] wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. We are all fools and slow of heart to believe what the prophets have written, and none but Jesus can open the Scriptures to our understanding, or bestow on us a capacity to understand when they are rightly expounded. It is not necessary that Jesus, in order to open them to the

understanding of our faith, should stand in our presence, revealed in his person to our natural eyes, or faculties. Shut up your eyes, and put out all the lights of intellect, and darken every avenue that brings natural intelligence to the natural understanding of natural men, and still the Christian's *new* heart will burn within him when Jesus draws near, by his Spirit, unperceived by reason, and communes with him by the way, for it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. He says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Now that Jesus is ascended up where he was before, enthroned in glory, to be known after the flesh no more, how often he draws nigh to his disciples as they journey and are sad; and unperceived by any reasoning faculty of their nature, by his Spirit, through the gifts bestowed on his church for mutual edification, or by the outpouring of his Spirit, with, or without those gifts, makes our hearts burn within us, opens so clearly the hidden treasures of his word, and beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounds unto us in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself, until the light of eternity breaks into our hearts in the most blessed refulgence of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ.

How lifeless and insipid to the heaven born soul, would even the Scriptures be, if no Jesus were there. It was the expounding of the things in the Scriptures concerning himself that set their hearts on fire.

As a fool in nature is one who has no capacity to comprehend the things of nature, so the term was applied to the two disciples, and may be to every disciple our Lord, in special reference to the total incapacity of our natural mind and faculties to comprehend the things contained in the Scriptures concerning the Lord Jesus, for it was clearly the case with these disciples. It was their natural eyes that failed to see, and their natural senses which failed to recognize the

person of their risen Lord, while the new man of their heart was drinking in, feeding and feasting upon the spiritual import of every word. How striking is this exemplification of the total incapacity of the natural or outward man to comprehend the things of the Spirit, which things the eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man; but God hath revealed them to his spiritual children by his Spirit. For while it is emphatically declared that the flesh profiteth nothing, and that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, and that the things of the Spirit are foolishness to the natural man, and that the natural man cannot know them, because they can only be spiritually discerned; it is as positively declared, that "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." "But God hath revealed them [the things of the Spirit] unto us by his Spirit."

In our experience we see not God or Christ with the natural eye. "No man hath seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, hath revealed him." John 1:18, and I John 4:12. Yet the same apostle says, "The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us." It was not manifest to our natural eyes, but to the eyes of our understanding, which are the eyes of the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Flesh and blood cannot reveal it, neither can it be revealed to flesh and blood, but to the faith of those who have the faith of the Son of God; otherwise flesh and blood could inherit the kingdom, or the things of the spiritual kingdom. The Holy Ghost has declared by the inspired apostle, that "no man hath seen, nor can see," nor approach unto him "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light" I Timothy 6:15,16. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of

glory." I Peter 1:8. "This is life eternal, [not life mortal] that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. Jesus said to Philip, and also to us, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also." "I am in the Father, and the Father is in me." But since the ascension of our risen Redeemer, no man has with his natural eyes, or life, or intellectual faculties, ever seen the Father or the Son; yet all who have eternal life have received a revelation of both the Father and the Son, to their faith, to the eyes of their spiritual understanding. Hence they who are born of the Spirit see the kingdom of God; behold the King in his beauty, and behold the land that is very far off, while all that nature, even in the saints which are born only of the flesh, remains in utter darkness; for no man, either saints or sinner, by searching, or by the light of nature or of reason can find out God. It is therefore unquestionably true that we are all fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken of the things concerning Jesus.

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" This interrogatory was put to the disciples, and to us, that we may the more fully appreciate the necessity of the sufferings and death of the Redeemer. If viewed only as seen by men, and decided by human reason, and as expressed by the disciples, it would seem only as a triumph of the powers of darkness over the Son of God. To our carnal or fleshly minds it would seem as it did to the taunting Jews, when they said in derision, "He saved others, let him now save himself. If he be the Son of God, let him come down from the cross, and we will believe on him." But the question presses home the solemn enquiry, Was there not a necessity for the sufferings and death of Christ? To meet and answer this question all that the prophets have spoken, and all that is written in the books of Moses, and in the Psalms, must be brought to bear upon the subject, and Jesus, as the only efficient expounder of divine testimony

going before, must open these Scriptures, in their testimony of him. With our natural senses we see, or read, the account of a man of sorrow, treacherously betrayed by a professed disciple who was numbered with the apostles, rudely seized by an armed band of men, led away unresistingly to Pilate, confronted by a clamorous mob, impeached by false testimony, condemned to die, and led to the place of execution as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. He was nailed to the cross, and crucified. Writhing in agony, he cried, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?" He dies, and is taken down from the cross and laid away in the tomb, and a guard of soldiers watch his sepulchre, with a strict charge to keep him there. In the absence of the Scriptures on the subject, what more natural conclusion than that implied in the words of the disciples? "We trusted that it had been he that should have redeemed Israel." They had trusted, but now their confidence was shaken, and they were sad. Before we censure these two sad and sorrowing disciples for the weakness of their faith, let us enquire, how has it been with us? Has not Christ been evidently set forth crucified among us - have we not received the comfortable assurance in our hearts, by his word and by his Spirit, that "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows," - that he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed; and after having rejoiced in the overflowing assurance that he has washed and cleansed us with his own blood, and shed his love abroad in us, have we not yielded in sadness many times to our fears, that we had mistaken him, and taken a shadow for a substance, an illusion for a reality; and have we not said in the sadness of our hearts, We trusted that the lovely Savior who once appeared to us as the chiefest among ten thousand, had redeemed us? But when our faith has been assailed by our fears, have we not faltered and doubted, and traveled on our

weary way in gloomy depression, until our gracious Lord has come to us, communed with us, and made himself known to us in the breaking of bread? In his communion with us, in expounding to us the Scriptures, he has enabled us to see that all the painful discouragements we have met with were precisely what the Scriptures had before testified we must pass through. Instead of looking unto Jesus, we have had our eyes directed to ourselves, or to the angry billows which threaten to engulf us, and our confidence has yielded to fear. But when the Lord has vanquished from us our cruel doubts and fears, have we not reproached ourselves, saying, O fools, and slow of heart to believe. Ought not we to endure trials, and suffer with him who for the joy set before him endured the cross and despised the shame? The Scriptures have been opened to us, and we have read that "Unto us it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only that we should believe on him, but also that we should suffer for his sake." And when these Scriptures are applied by his Spirit with power to us, we again feel, as the apostle expressed, a desire; even at the utter loss of all that we once counted gain, that we may know him, and the power of his resurrection; yes, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and be conformed to his death.

But to return to the question, - Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? Aside from the purpose of God, and the things written of him in the Scriptures, we confess we can see no just cause for his sufferings. He was holy and harmless, and separate from sinners. No guile could be detected in his mouth, or heart. There was nothing found to justify those who put him to death; they were charged with the crime of murder in his case, for they hated him without a cause, and with wicked hands crucified him. Short of the revelation which God has made in the Scriptures, we boldly challenge the wisdom of men to show any just cause for his crucifixion.

Yet there was a cause, a just, a righteous cause, which we can only comprehend when Jesus by his Spirit opens our understanding, that we may understand the Scriptures. Then he says to us, as he said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” This settles the matter, and answers the question. He came down from heaven to do and suffer all things which were written, and heaven and earth should pass away, but not a jot or tittle of the Scriptures should fail till all was fulfilled. The Old Testament Scriptures had foretold of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. Moses in his law, and in all the ritual of Judaism, has declared this in the sacrifices and offerings which were under the law, and all the prophets had predicted his sufferings, and the Psalms dwelt largely on the same subject. Thus showing that he was delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, to be put to death by wicked men and with wicked hands.

Again, it behooved him to suffer and to rise from the dead, to accomplish the redemption and salvation of his people. It was the will of the Father; and the Father’s will is the supreme and eternal law and standard of righteousness. Nothing but right can be entertained in his will, and therefore nothing in opposition to his will can be right, however it may seem to our feeble judgment. It was the Father’s will that of all that he had given to Christ he should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. It therefore behooved Christ to suffer. It pleased the Father to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. He has laid on him the iniquities of all his chosen people, and he was delivered to die for our offences, and was raised from the dead for our justification. Without this suffering, repentance could not be granted unto them. The law that they had transgressed knew nothing of

repentance nor of mercy. The transgressor died without mercy; for the law neither required nor accepted repentance. Its stern decree was, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” Neither repentance nor remission of sins can be consistent with the nature of the law. In order then to open the prison to them that were bound, to redeem them from the dominion and wrath of the law, and bring them under law to Christ, it behooved him to put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. And having risen from the dead he is exalted high upon his Mediatorial throne, to be a Prince and a Savior, to give [not demand] repentance unto Israel [not Esau], and remission of sins. Having by his one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified; he has sent his angels or messengers forth to the four winds of heaven, to preach repentance and remission of sins in his name. Not in the name or by the authority of any other. His name signifies the authority to which he is exalted as a Prince and a Savior, which is not only above, but *far* above all principality and power, and every name that is named in this world, or in that which is to come. And this name and supreme authority discriminates. No repentance or remission of sins can be preached in his name, only to Israel [his spiritual Israel], for he has given no authority to preach it to any other. Nor can this gift of repentance be separated from that of remission of sins: both are gifts; and repentance can no more be performed by any other name or power, than forgiveness of sins can be. To qualify even our Redeemer to give repentance and forgiveness of sins, it behooved him to suffer and die for their redemption, and to arise from the dead and enter his glory, as the exalted Prince, possessing all power in heaven and in earth, crowned with glory and honor as a Prince, and set upon his holy hill of Zion, to give gifts unto men, among which are prominently set forth that of repentance and forgiveness. It is not preaching repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins, in his name, or by his authority, when men in their own names, and on their own responsibility tell

sinners to repent. This preaching in his name is by his authority, by his express command, by chosen and ordained messengers, called, qualified and sent forth by him, began at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, and by his supreme power and authority it must extend to all nations whithersoever he sends it, and execute precisely what he has ordained, and then shall the end come.

Lengthy as we have made this article, we could extend our remarks indefinitely, without any fear of exhausting the subject. But what we have written we submit to our friend Stewart, and to such of our readers as feel interested.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 370 – 377

LUKE 24:26

Brother Beebe: - I wish you would write a discourse on the last chapter of Luke, twenty-sixth verse: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

A.R. Dorris,
Webster Co., KY., August 1, 1862.

REPLY: Saints and angels may well be amazed at the idea of the blessed Christ of God appearing in the character of a sufferer, and it is not surprising that the two disciples with whom he was conversing when he uttered the words above written, recoiled at the thought that wicked men had been permitted to crucify their Lord and Master. Like all others of the disciples, they could only understand the profound mystery so far as it was opened by revelation to their comprehension. They knew that they had loved him dearly, that they had trusted in him as the Messiah that was to come, and they verily believed that he was the long looked for Deliverer that was to redeem Israel, but how much he was to suffer in the accomplishment of that work they did not realize. They had witnessed his arrest, his trial and his conviction, they had probably followed, perhaps afar off, to the place of execution, saw his writhing agony on the cross, heard his bitter groans, and heard him cry, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" Ah, well they knew that he was crucified, dead and buried, but that he was indeed risen again from the dead they did not know. True they had been astonished at a report of some women who were early at the sepulcher, who averred that he had risen, but how could they rejoice in a risen Jesus until as such he manifested himself to them? So it still continues to be with the disciples of Jesus, for now we know only in part, we see only as through a glass darkly, but the blessed prospect

looms up before us, that as soon as that which is in part shall be done away, we shall see face to face, and know even as we are known.

But our brother desires us to discourse on the text: “O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” We do not understand the Redeemer to call his disciples fools by way of reproach, or as implying impatience with their infirmities, but to chide their despondency and dispel their doubtings. A fool is simply a person who is destitute of understanding, and this was their case on that occasion, for if they had comprehended the matter, if they had known that thus it behooved him to suffer and to rise again from the dead on the third day, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name to Jews and Gentiles, and that this dreadful suffering was now accomplished, that sin and death and hell were vanquished, that the church of God was now redeemed from all iniquity, that now his mediatorial glory was about to break forth in heavenly radiance, instead of desponding they would have rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

“And slow of heart to believe.” The apostle says, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” That is, in regard to spiritual things. Carnal or nominal professors of religion may believe their respective creeds with their heads, with their carnal minds and with their natural powers, as evidence is presented, and they may be quick to believe, for they are under no restraint. We see them eager to drink in delusion that suits their carnal lust, and hurriedly they embrace the doctrine of men, because they love it, and because it requires no grace, no teaching of the Holy Spirit to instruct them; but the children of God can only lay hold of the evidences on which their belief in Christ is predicated, by faith, and their faith is not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

And it is the work of the Spirit of truth to present the evidences of eternal things to their faith, and they are such fools they can only believe and understand what they are taught of God by his Spirit, for they have not a particle of wit or wisdom, only what is treasured up for them in him who of God is made unto them wisdom, for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. They feel and confess that they are slow to believe all that the prophets have written. They were not without confidence in the prophets of the Lord, and undoubtedly believed some of the things which the prophets had written, but they were slow or tardy in believing all. We do not suppose the two disciples disbelieved or doubted what the prophets had written in predicting the coming of One who should redeem Israel, for they referred to that promise, as one bound to their hearts, and although they might confidently believe many things thus written in the Old Testament, their understanding of the Scriptures was so limited that they were slow to believe it all. But what the prophets have written is one undivided and unbroken testimony, beautiful and glorious in its harmony and identity; hence Jesus, fully understanding their deficiency, applied the proper and only corrective. He began at Moses, that is, with the five books of Moses, with which the Old Testament begins, and beginning also with all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. So we perceive, fools though these dear disciples were, as also all his disciples still are, (for if any man would know anything he must first become a fool, that he may be wise,) yet they lacked no wisdom or knowledge that Jesus did not possess. When we consider the amount of instruction contained in the discourse of Jesus, embracing all that Moses and the prophets had written concerning himself, together with all that was contained in the other Scriptures on the same subject, all comprised in his discourse to them, is it any wonder that their hearts were inflamed, and burned in them, while he talked with them by the way, and opened

to them the Scriptures? These Scriptures had not only predicted his advent to the world, but they had also testified before hand his sufferings, and the glory that should follow. The prophets themselves did not understand all the glory of their prophecy; there were some things sealed up from their understanding, as Peter says, They sought diligently "what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

We come now to the appeal which Christ made to the disciples: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" On no such grounds as could justify Pilate in passing the sentence of death upon him, for he had acknowledged that he found no cause of death in him, nor ought he to have suffered in any sense that could justify the Jews and Romans to conspire against him. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners; he had done no injury to any man, but to the contrary, he had healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, given sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf; he had fed the hungry, and ministered comfort to the afflicted; he had raised the dead, and cast out devils. Was there anything in this to justify their malice? He had invaded no rights claimed by earthly monarchs or potentates, he had paid tribute and custom according to their laws, and taught his disciples to imitate his example. Then why ought he to suffer these things? His enemies watched him diligently, and constantly lay in wait to find some cause of complaint that they might accuse him, but all in vain, for it cost them large sums of money to suborn witnesses to testify falsely against him, that they might procure his arrest. But although he was holy, innocent and pure, though there was no guile found in his mouth, although the eternal Father from the skies had proclaimed that he was his beloved Son, in whom he was well pleased, still we are, from Christ's own words, assured that there was necessity for him to suffer these things, for in

the forty-sixth and forty-seventh verses of the same chapter he said unto them, “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” As it was written thus in the Scriptures, and the Scriptures containing the important record were written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, it is very evident that the grounds on which it behooved Christ to suffer were to be found in the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that his being finally delivered up to these sufferings was in fulfillment of what God’s hand and counsel had before determined should be done. By a careful comparison of what was written aforetime, with the testimony of the New Testament, and the record of the fulfillment of what was written, we learn that the necessity of Christ’s sufferings was indispensable for the redemption and salvation of his people. In pursuance of the purpose and grace of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began, Christ was set up, or given to be the Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. Such was the relationship between Christ, in his mediatorial Headship over his body, the church, that all demands of the law and justice of God upon the church were assumed by him, and it was upon this, and on no other ground that we can conceive of, that it behooved him to suffer these things. That people whom the Father gave him, in their earthly nature have all sinned, and were all by nature children of wrath, even as others. But God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with him. Thus we perceive that the astonishing display of mercy and grace in the redemption of his people proceeded from the great love wherewith God had loved them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, and that love was so great, so strong and so immutable, that our apostasy in Adam and our

being dead in sins did not change or abate it. For God hath commended his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Truly this love is stronger than death, but in contemplating the unavoidable necessity of Christ's sufferings we must take into consideration the principles of law and justice which were involved, for in this lies much of the mystery of our salvation, how God could be just and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus. No mortal wisdom could suggest a plan that would secure the salvation of sinners, without infringing the justice of God. The law would not admit of the substitution of an innocent sufferer for the transgressions of the guilty, unless there was some just and righteous ground of responsibility involved on the part of the sufferer. Husbands are in law responsible for the debts contracted by their wives, parents for children, etc., but in criminal cases these relations will not hold the innocent responsible, there must then be found a relationship still nearer; we know of no law that will exempt the head from responsibility for the acts of the body, or members of the body. On this principle then we conclude the law could justly look to Christ as Head and Surety for his body, the church, and certain it is that "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." "Surely, he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." The foregoing testimony from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah illustrates the subject better than volumes of uninspired comments, showing upon what principle it was just for the dear Redeemer to suffer, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. As the Shepherd he laid down his life for his sheep; for as they were his sheep before they had transgressed, justice demanded the ransom at his hands. He so stood related to and identified with his flock, that all their sins were laid on him, and he was numbered with the transgressors, and the extent of his atonement is forever settled. "For the transgression of my people [saith God] was he stricken." And by his stripes we are healed. The ground then on which he "ought to suffer," was not that we as transgressors had any claim on him for anything good or bad that we had done, or intended to do, but it was as these Scriptures clearly show, by the grace of God, and not the will or works of men, that he tasted death for God's people; himself bearing our sins in his own body. Thus it behooved or became Christ to suffer. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." (Heb. 2:10) "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14) His

sufferings were indispensable, not only for bringing many sons unto glory, but also to prepare his entrance into the glory that was to follow. “Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?”

We presume the glory into which Christ was to enter was the glory of his mediatorial triumph over death, hell and sin, in the perfect redemption of his people, the organization of his kingdom, the ascension to his throne in Zion, and that revenue of praise which must redound to his great name to everlasting. It is true he had a glory with the Father before the world began, and as we understand, the glory of eternal deity was his in common with the Father, from everlasting, but his endurance of sufferings was not required to precede his possession of that glory. John says, “We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” And the saints of every age have a revelation of this when God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines in their hearts, to give them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. For he is the brightness of his Father’s glory, and the express image of his person. The glory of which he speaks in our text we conclude must be that of which he spake in his address to the Father, (John 17:22-24) the glory the Father gave him, and which he has given to his people. It must, we think, refer especially to his mediatorial glory, and that particularly which he has secured by the accomplishment of all the work which the Father gave him to do. The glorious triumph of the Son of God over all enemies, his endless victory over all opposing powers, was to be followed by his resurrection from the dead, his ascension up on high, his leading captivity captive, and the reception of his kingdom, his coronation and his throne, will all be comprised in that glory which he was to enter. Before the organization of his kingdom in her gospel beauty, the subjects required to be redeemed from their captivity, and their redemption could only be effected by his

sufferings, hence we are told that he for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the majesty on high. Thus in the majesty on high he has entered the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. While the things which he had to suffer intervened between him and the consummation of his glory, he was found in fashion as a man, took on him the form of a servant, learned obedience and was obedient even unto death. But the joy was then before him, and he passed through the depths of deep waters without faltering, and like Jacob, when serving Laban for Rachel, the anticipated bride, made the years of servitude seem as but a few days. So the blessed Savior anticipated the glory that was to follow his sufferings. High seated now upon his imperial throne, his people are not only redeemed from the curse and dominion of the law, and the lawful captives thus delivered, but the Spirit of immortality is sent down in his name to quicken and call all the trophies of his triumph, and his people are made willing in the day of his power. Vested now with all the power of heaven and earth, he gives repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins. Repentance and remission are now preached in his name, and his arm is made bare for salvation, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him and his work before him. He gathers now his sheep with his arm and carries them in his bosom, and they all know experimentally, when he opens the eyes of their understanding, what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us ward who believe, according to his mighty power.

In view of all this, ye trembling saints, as ye wade through the bitter waters of affliction, consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be weary and faint in your mind. He has laid up in heaven for you a crown of unfading glory, and you are called to know the fellowship

of his sufferings and to be conformed to his death. Look steadfastly then to the mark of the prize of your high calling, and press on, your suffering days will soon be ended, your sighing and sorrowing soon shall cease, and God will wipe away all your tears. If it behooved Christ to suffer first and then to enter his glory, shall we complain of the sufferings of the present time, when so well we know that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory?

> "His way was much harder and rougher than thine,
> Did Christ your Lord suffer, and wilt thou repine?"

Middletown, N.Y.,
Sept. 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 249 – 257

MALACHI III. 1.

REPLY TO BROTHER ROGE.

The first passage proposed for consideration is that in Mal. iii. 1, “Behold I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.”

There are two messengers mentioned in this text. The one is called my messenger, or the messenger of the Lord, to prepare his way before him; the other is the messenger of the covenant, &c. The former undoubtedly refers to John the Baptist, and the latter to our Lord Jesus Christ. The exact fulfillment of this prediction is found in the coming of John, and the advent of Christ, in the order of time signified in the text. As a messenger of the Lord, John is again spoken of in chapter iv. 5 and 6, under the name of Elijah the prophet; because he should come in the spirit of Elijah, and the work of preparing the way of the Lord, by turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, and of the children to the fathers, is signified; and as to its application to John, our Lord has settled the point, Matt. xi. 13 and 14, “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John; and if ye will receive it, this is Elias (or Elijah) which was for to come.” In further testimony that John was intended by the prophet, we refer brother loge to Luke i. 76-79. The words of Zacharias, who being filled with the Holy Ghost, after his mouth was opened, prophesied and said, “And thou, child,” addressing the infant John, “shall be called the prophet of the highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; to give knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the

dayspring from on high hath visited us," &c. To go into the whole ministry of John, as the appointed harbinger of Christ, and notice all his works in preparing the way of the Lord by turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, the voice of his crying in the wilderness, his preaching and saying unto the people that they should believe on him that was to come after him, that is on Christ, and his baptizing such as professed faith in Christ, and thus making ready a people prepared of God, would swell this article to an extravagant length. It is perhaps sufficient for brother Roge's purpose that we have established the point of John the Baptist being intended as the first messenger in the order of time, and referred him to the New Testament record of the ministry of the Baptist, for a clear illustration of that wherein he was appointed to prepare the way of the advent of Jesus Christ our Lord.

"And the Lord, whom ye seek, even the messenger of the covenant," &c. This second messenger is called the Lord, and the messenger of the covenant, and the work assigned him and the titles given to him, as well as the time specified for his coming, abundantly prove that this messenger is none other than the Lord from heaven, the Messiah which was to come. First, he was the Lord whom Israel sought. The apostle Peter says that the prophets sought diligently what, or what manner of time the spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it spake beforehand of his sufferings, and of the glory that should follow. And Christ himself said to his disciples, Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things which ye see, and have riot seen them. – Matt xiii. 17 The family of Israel, carnal in then general views concerning him, were looking for his coming, so that he was very properly designated "the Lord whom ye seek." But his identity is further qualified, thus: "Even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in." Two proper subjects of inquiry present themselves in this clause of the text, viz.: how is

Christ to be regarded as the Messenger of the covenant? and, in what sense are we to understand that as such they delight in him? And first we may inquire, Of what covenant is he the Messenger? There were several covenants made with the people of Israel. First, the covenant which God made with Abraham, commonly called the covenant of circumcision; second, the covenant made with Moses and all the people in the wilderness, commonly called the Decalogue, or Sinai covenant; the covenant also which was made with David, which was ordered in all things and sure. But the covenant intended in our text, of which Christ is the Messenger, is emphatically called *the* covenant, and which, by reference to the context, chapter ii. 4 and 5, we find to refer to the covenant that was with Levi. There is much said in modern times about the covenant stipulations made between the Father and the Son, in which proposals were made and accepted, contract sealed, and ratified, &c, but as we have not been able to find the record of any such transactions in the scriptures, we shall be under the necessity of referring our readers for such information to those who are better able to expound.

Moses, in blessing Levi, says, "Let thy Thummim and thy Urim be with thy holy one, whom thou didst prove at Massah, and with whom thou didst strive at the waters of Meribab; who said unto his father and to his mother, I have not seen him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his own children; for they have observed thy word, and kept thy covenant. They shall teach Jacob thy judgments, and Israel thy law: they shall put incense before thee, and whole burnt sacrifice upon thine altar. Bless, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that Irate him, that they rise not again." – Deut. xxxiii. 8-11. Compare this. prophetic blessing with Mal. ii. 4-6, and in. 3, 4, and it will not be difficult to perceive that Levi, at the head of the old

covenant priesthood, pointed figuratively to him who is at the head of the new covenant priesthood; or in other words, that Levi was a type of Christ, and that the covenant of life and peace, over which Levi presided in his priesthood, was typical of the new testament or covenant of which Jesus Christ is the. Mediator, the Apostle (or sent Messenger) and High Priest of our profession. That life and peace, belonging to the Levitical priesthood, was only temporal. The provision of that covenant to which the Levitical priesthood belonged, was that a man that obeyed should live; that the sinner should be cut off from Israel, and should die; and for obedience, God would also give them peace, by fighting their battles, and smiting through the loins of them that opposed them; and with Levi was this covenant of life and peace, because that the provisions of the covenant were such, that when the delinquent Israelite had sinned, and fallen under the sentence of death, offerings were to be made by the sons of Levi, in the priesthood, for atonement, whereby the offender was permitted to live, and peace was obtained through the shedding of blood by that priesthood. But all that belonged to Levi and to his priesthood was to be done away, and his covenant and priesthood to be superceded by the priesthood of Christ, which priesthood is after the order of Melchisedec, and not after the order of Aaron; not by the law of a fleshly or carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life, and the new and better covenant, which shall endure as the days of heaven. This new and everlasting covenant is anti-typical of the covenant made with Noah, with Abraham, Moses and David, and unites all the excellencies which were prefigured by them all. Like that with Noah, it assures the saints of abolished wrath, and presents the sure pledge of the rainbow, encircling the Mediatorial throne of Christ. Like that with Abraham, it embraces all the seed of Christ. Like that with Moses and the whole house. of Israel, its provisions are love to God and good will to man, and a spiritual Sabbath of unremitting rest to all the spiritual seed. Like that with

David, it is ordered in all things and sure. It is, in a spiritual sense, a “covenant of life and peace,” and it is ordained, in the hands of Christ, who is our spiritual Noah, Abraham, Moses and David. He is the Levi of the chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation and peculiar people, that shall show forth his praise.

Christ we understand to be the Messenger of this covenant. All its provisions, promises, oaths and securities were brought by Jesus Christ. Not a syllable of its contents is ever known to man, until Christ, the Messenger, is received. None but the Lamb can look upon the book or open the seals thereof. For all the promises of God are in him, yea, and in him, amen, to the glory of God by us.

In what sense the children of Israel, as a people, delighted in him, may be a matter of some doubt. But it is certain that the spiritual people of our God, under the old as well as new dispensation, did, and still do delight in him as the Messenger of the everlasting covenant. Abraham rejoiced to see his day, and he saw it and was glad. And all Old Testament saints prayed that the salvation of Israel might come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

“Shall suddenly come to his temple.” There is more than one sense in which Christ has come to his temple. First, that body in which he became incarnate was his temple. (See John ii. 19, 21.) “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” “But he spake of the temple of his body.” Secondly, the temple at Jerusalem may be considered his, for all that the Father hath is his; and he called it his Father’s house, and charged the Jews with making it a den of thieves. But in a more direct spiritual sense, his church is his temple. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man shall defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy,

which temple ye are." – l Cor. iii. 16, 17. "What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." – 2 Cor. vi. 19, 20. In regard to each of these temples, Christ came suddenly. The coming of Christ in the flesh was sudden; at a moment unlooked for by the Jews. To the temple at Jerusalem, when he came, in fulfillment of Zech. ix. 9, it was sudden and unlooked for by the buyers and sellers of merchandise, and the changers of money; and when the Jews and Romans had destroyed the temple of his body, in his resurrection of it on the third day he came suddenly, unexpectedly, and to the surprise and confusion of his enemies. But to us it seems more in harmony with the connection. of the text, to understand his coming suddenly to his temple, as applicable to his coming after his ascension to glory, when he came at the day of pentecost to reign, by his Spirit, as Head of his church, and as the King of saints. We are the more strongly inclined to this view of the subject from the following considerations: first, his coming on the day of pentecost was sudden. Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." – Acts ii. 2. Second, the connection of the prophecy, "But who may abide the (lay of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap. And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and as silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." – Mal. iii. 2, 3. This looks like the Mediatorial government of Christ in his kingdom in its gospel organization. Third, another striking expression of this prophet, in the connection of the subject, is, "Behold the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all that are proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith

the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." This prediction was not, we presume, fulfilled until the destruction of Jerusalem; and in the preaching of Peter, on the day of pentecost, he asserted that the wonderful events which then transpired, according to the words of Joel the prophet, must be fulfilled before the great and notable day of the Lord. The day of his coming must, according to the view we have taken, include his spiritual reign with his saints on the earth, from the day of pentecost to the end of time, and consequently embraces the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, the development of the mystery of iniquity, the overthrow of the mall of sin, and finally, the execution of the last enemy that shall be destroyed. And it is truly a serious inquiry, "Who may abide the day of his coming?" All who defile the temple, the church, shall be destroyed.

What we have written above, we submit to the consideration of brother loge, and to all who may read it; if in any point we have differed from the views of our brethren, we have not designed to invite controversy, nor to set forth our views as a standard of orthodoxy. We have simply given our views by request, and in the hope that at least some may be edified.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
November 15, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 701 – 708

MALACHI III. 10; MATTHEW VI. 33.

DEAR AGED FATHER IN ISRAEL: – Please give your views on Malachi iii. 10; also on Matthew vi. 33. By complying with this request you will oblige one who desires to know only the truth.

H. E. M.
Milam, Texas, Nov. 2, 1879.

REPLY: – On the first text named above we published such views as we have in volume xxi., No. 15, for August 1st, 1853; but as our inquirer after truth may not be able to obtain a copy of that issue of the SIGNS, we will briefly say that the tithes which the carnal Israelites were required to bring were for support of the Levitical priesthood, and consisted of the one-tenth part of all the increase of their lands, flocks and herds, according as they were prospered of the Lord. These tithes were required to be brought annually, in obedience to the covenant which they were under, and for their obedience they were to be blessed with temporal blessings, and for their disobedience they were to be punished with temporal judgments. The tribe of Levi was not to have any inheritance of real estate, like the other tribes; but as priests and Levites they were to serve in the priesthood and live of the altar, on the tithes and offerings thus provided for their support.

Israel under that covenant was a type of the spiritual Israel under the new covenant; and the sons of Levi were especially figurative of the chosen generation and royal priesthood of Christ, which is not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedec – not after the law of a carnal (fleshly) commandment, but by the power of an endless life. The

tithes which Israel were required to bring were of what God himself had supplied them with, for they had nothing that had not been given them of him, and their faithful obedience to that law was not to impoverish, but to enrich them; and so in the antitypical application of the subject, the things which are required of the saints for supplying the house of God with meat include and call for nothing that God has not first bestowed on them. An apostle inquires, “What have we that we have not received?” Of all that we have received of God as saints, whether in providence or in grace, of things temporal or spiritual, all is committed to us as unto stewards, who are required to be faithful in our stewardship; and a portion of it, according as the Lord has prospered us, is to be applied to the benefit of the house of God. The primitive saints did not call aught of what they possessed their own. All their possessions, both of carnal and spiritual things, were laid at the apostles’ feet, to be disposed of as they directed; for whatever served to enrich the body, enriched all the members of the body, and to withhold more than is meet, tends to poverty. The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand; while the vile person will practice hypocrisy, and utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and cause the drink of the thirsty to fail. – Isaiah xxxii. 5-8. Nor can the faithful obedience of the saints impoverish them; for in doing what Christ has commanded there is great reward, and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land.

From the day when Abel took a lamb from the flock to offer in sacrifice to the Lord, the service of God has been attended with more or less expense; and the willing sacrifice of a portion of the temporal things which God has entrusted to the stewardship of his people, is still the reasonable service of all who love the Lord.

The tithes which were required of the carnal Israelites also point to the spiritual gifts which God has graciously bestowed upon his people under the gospel dispensation. God has supplied an ample sufficiency of temporal things to his people to meet every legitimate want of the church, to sustain those who, like the Levites, are required to give attendance at the altar, or to give themselves wholly to the work of the ministry, and to forego the privilege of equal inheritance with the other tribes, as also to meet all the necessities of the church, supply her poor, and provide all that is required to meet the expense of a place to meet for social and public devotion; he also supplied such gifts as are required for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. In his glorious triumph over our captivity he ascended up on high and received gifts for men, and in the distribution of them "he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers." – Eph. iv. 8-12. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." That is, for the mutual benefit of all the members of the same body. "To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit," &c. – Read 1 Cor. xii. All these gifts by the Spirit were prefigured by the tithes which were enjoined by the ceremonial law, and all designed for feeding the flock of God, and when all are in active exercise in the church, there can be no lack of meat in the house or church of God.

But as the whole nation of Israel in the type are charged with the sacrilegous crime of robbing God in tithes and in offerings, have not we, who claim to be the spiritual Israel of God, reason to fear that in tithes and offerings we are keeping back from the storehouse of our God those temporal things or spiritual gifts which he has entrusted to us as

stewards, and which, although now for a little season are in our possession, still belong to God?

Do we not see how the meat in the church of God is affected by the bringing in or withholding of the tithes and offerings committed to us? If by withholding of our carnal things the ministers of the word are driven by necessity to their fishing nets or tent making, and the poor are neglected in the daily ministrations, or if the gifts which God has given for the edifying of the body of Christ, or if all or any of the diversified gifts bestowed on every member is kept back, will not the storehouse be impoverished, and what is still more dreadful, will not God be robbed?

The other text on which we are requested to write is a command of our Lord Jesus Christ to his disciples to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and an assurance that all things else shall be added to those who obey this command. Only those who are born again can see the kingdom of God, consequently they cannot seek it successfully; but all who are born of the Spirit are commanded not only to seek it, but to seek it first, to let this be their first work as soon as they are born of God. It is not to be deferred, or second to any other work or employment. Not even our necessary food or clothing; however destitute we may be of food or raiment, God knoweth that we have need of these things, and he has them in store for us, and has promised to supply them. He clothes the grass of the field, and feeds the ravens, and careth for the sparrows, and has numbered the hairs of our head, and will not neglect to provide for his willing and obedient children, who need his care and providence. O ye of little faith! Some who have manifested cheering evidences of a new birth have lingered from a sense of their own personal unworthiness, as though they had understood the blessed Savior to say, Seek first the kingdom of God and your own righteousness, and don’t be in

a hurry, for you may not be fit to fill a place in that kingdom; but if ever you find yourself worthy, and feel sure that you will hold out faithful to the end, then will be a good time to take the yoke of Jesus upon you. Wait, says one, for the Lord's time; how very prudent and careful Satan himself can seem to be, when he would mislead the timid, trembling children of God into disobedience. What are we to know of the Lord's time, beyond what he has informed us in his word? Has he not already commanded you to make it your *first* work to follow him? Has he not already given you the example? Has he not commanded all who love him to keep his commandments? Is he your King and Law-giver? Does not the command of a king require immediate and implicit obedience? Who is he that dares to tell the waiting child of God, Wait until you are compelled to obey? wait until you see the chastising rod coming? Where is there example or precept for waiting one hour from the time that the love of God is shed abroad in our heart, and an opportunity presented? The pattern in the New Testament is, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? The jailer and his house were baptized the same hour of the night in which they were converted to God. And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized," &c. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." But not only when we have sought and found the kingdom of God and his righteousness are we to take his yoke, but in all our subsequent experience are we to make our allegiance to Jesus, and our hope in God's righteousness the primary business of our life, forsaking all to follow Jesus through evil as well as through good report. No worldly prospects of gain, no alluring vanities of the world, should be allowed to keep us from the assemblies of the saints and from the house of prayer. Seek first the kingdom of God; be not deceived by any of the provinces of Babylon, or by any of the worldly tents of wickedness. The kingdom of God is that kingdom

which God himself, not man, has set up, and over which Christ our Lord presides upon the throne of power and grace, and where his princes rule in judgment. It is the habitation and city of the great King. The kingdom of God is not of this world: it is a spiritual kingdom; flesh and blood cannot inherit it. The King, the laws ordinances and privileges are all spiritual, and none but they who are born of the Spirit can see or enter into it. May all who have passed from death unto life seek not only the kingdom, but also the righteousness of God our Savior, and in his righteousness confide for justification before the throne, and trust in God to supply all that we need from abundant fullness for time and for eternity.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 16
August 15, 1880

MAMMOTH MEMORIAL

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representative of the United States, in Congress assembled -

The undersigned clergymen, of different denominations in New England hereby in the name of the Almighty God and in his presence, do solemnly protest against the passage of what is known as the Nebraska bill, or any repeal or modification of the existing legal prohibitions against slavery in that part of our national domain which it is proposed to organize into the Territories of Nebraska and Kansas. We protest against it as a great moral wrong - as a breach of faith eminently injurious to the moral principles of the community, and subversive of all confidence in national engagements - as a measure full of danger to the peace and even existence of our beloved Union and exposing us to the righteous judgments of the Almighty and your protestants as in duty bound, will ever pray.

Dated at Boston, this 1st day of March, A.D. 1854.

As one of the prominent signs of the times we copy the "Mammoth Memorial," as it is called, of the three thousand New England clergymen, remonstrating against the passage of the Nebraska bill. Had this extraordinary document emanated from the Roman Catholics the three thousand persons would have sounded the tocsin from the Atlantic to the Rocky Mountains; but coming as it does from the Babylon of New England Theology, it is regarded by the Hon. Mr. Huston, and a few others in the Senate, as the voice of God himself, uttered by his *vice gerents* on the earth. We are told that all the clergy of New England excepting the Catholics, have signed this remonstrance. Why are they excepted? Certainly not because they reject, or disbelieve the idea that

God has vice gerents to act for him on earth and in his name to:

"Deal damnation round the board,
To each they deem his foe."

but the more probable cause is the feud which has also long existed between the Old Mother and her harlot daughters. The mother contending that the pope is the only vice gerent of Almight God, and her daughters claiming that their clergy are all that the Roman Pontiffs ever claimed to be. On this occasion the Catholics may use the fable of the wolf and the shepherd in which it is said that "A wolf passing a house occupied by a number of shepherds looked in and saw the shepherds feasting on mutton, on which he exclaimed, 'Good Lord, what a fuss they would have made had they caught me thus engaged!"'

Why it should be thought less extravagant or wicked for the clergy to assume the name and attributes of the Almighty God and hurl the thunder of their anathemas against the Senate of the United States, or to dictate to them what laws they may enact and what they may repeal, than for the Pope of Rome to exercise the same authority over the kings of the earth, is hard for us to perceive.

With the political bearings of the Nebraska bill, and of all other bills before the Congress of the United States we do not design to meddle through our paper. We have higher and more sacred matters to dwell upon; matters which concern the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His kingdom is not of this world, and he has commanded the subjects of his kingdom to mark the distinction he has made between the church and the state: to render unto Caesar the things which belong to Caesar, and to God the things which belong to God. As citizens of this world we are commanded

to be in subjection to the powers that be, because they are instituted of God. So far, therefore, as they do not infringe upon our inalienable rights of conscience, we are required by the authority of our Lord and master to be in subjection. In a representative government like our own, christians, including ministers of the gospel, in common with all other citizens have important interests at stake. To these they are to attend only as citizens of the world and fellow citizens with the children of men. They should never be known in their religious vocation, only in relation to the affairs of Zion.

Three thousand clergymen! What a swarm for little New England to muster! And do they think to intimidate the Senate and the Representatives of this great Republic by their blasphemous assumption of the name of the Almighty God? Will they alarm and terrify our Senators by threats of judgment and of the fiery indignation of the Lord? Who would have thought that so soon after the rebuke they received from the Senate a few years ago on the subject of the Sunday Mail they would again impose on that body the necessity of the repeating reproof?

It is perhaps well for the safety of our country that these religious aspirants have couched their remonstrance in as extravagant and insulting language as they have. “It will do more to open the eyes of the community in regard to their dictatorial spirit than volumes which might have been written.”

The castigation which they received from the undaunted Senators, Douglass, Mason, Butler, Pettit, and others may make them wince; but we hope it may do them good. Should the whole affair be so overruled as to lead the Senate and House of Representatives to abolish the chaplaincy, and so effectually sever these unnatural ligaments which now unite

the church and state, we shall have cause for unfeigned thanks to God.

Before we close our remarks, we wish to say that in the church of the living God there are no such distinctions as that of *clergy and laity.* There is no aristocrisy in the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. The subjects of that spiritual kingdom are all one in Christ. They call no man on earth their master, or their father; for they have one Father which is God. He that is least among them is to be their minister; and he that is greatest among them is to be the servant of all. The ministers of the gospel of our Redeemer are not allowed to lord it over the church, much less are they to exercise authority over the state. None but the most corrupt pretenders, the most arrogant hypocrites would desire to usurp ecclesiastical authority over the secular affairs of the world. In the Senate Mr. Douglas said - Yet here we find a large body of preachers, perhaps three thousand following the lead of a circular which was calculated to mislead and deceive the public. They have here come forward with an atrocious falsehood and an atrocious calumny against this body, and prostituted the pulpit, prostituted the sacred desk to the miserable and corrupting influence of party politics. It matters not whether they have misled the whole of the people of New England, and drawn them unto their pool of dirty water. It matters not whether the misrepresentation has taken a broad scope, or been confined to a few - I hold it is our duty to expose the conduct of men who either from ignorance or willful false knowledge, will avail themselves of their sacred calling to arraign the conduct of Senators here in the discharge of their duties. I hold that this Senate is as capable of judging whether our action involves moral turpitude, whether it involves the subversion of morals, whether it subjects us to the judgment of the Almighty, as are these political preachers who do not understand the question. It is evident that these men know

not what they are talking about. It is evident that they ought to be rebuked, and required to confine themselves to their vocation instead of neglecting their holy religion, violating its sacred principles of truth and honor, and getting up a document here which is offensive and which no gentleman can endorse without violating all the rules of courtesy, or propriety, and of honor. There seems to be an attempt to pile upon our table offensive documents - slander after slander, libel after libel in order that the abolition press may copy it as coming from the records of the Senate and go back and give it credit in the country.

Mr. Houston said - This memorial, signed by three thousand ministers of the Living God - his vice gerents on earth, was evidence that the people were deeply moved by it. Ministers of the gospel were men - they had the same political rights as other men. All citizens had a right to petition and that right could not be denied. By becoming ministers of the gospel the memorialists had lost none of their political rights. There was no longer any use in denying that the Nebraska bill had revived again excitement.

Mr. Mason said - The right of all citizens of the United States to petition Congress upon any subject properly before them was one which he hoped never to see denied. All such memorials should be received and treated with the respect due to them. He hoped never to see the day when the Senate would treat such petitions otherwise. The memorial, however, was of a character different from others. It came from a class of persons who laid aside the character of American citizens and address their petitions as ministers of the Gospel - they petition as ministers of the Gospel and not as citizens. As ministers of the Gospel they come here and denounce the action of the Senate in anticipation, or after it has taken place. They do not stop there. In their character as ministers, they have the temerity to threaten the Senate with

the vengeance and judgments of the Almighty whom they profess to serve. Such language was not respectful, coming from any petitioners. Ministers of the Gospel, as such, were unknown to the constitution, or to our forms of government, and God forbid they should be known to it. It was the wise policy of our fathers, and it had been the universal desire of all the people, to keep all the ministers of the Gospel, as such, and the government as wide apart as possible, and the wisdom of that policy was made manifest today by the paper now lying on the table. The history of the world had shown the evils of recognizing ministers of the Gospel as forming any part of the government. In all countries and in all times, when vested with power, they proved to be the most arrogant of all others. On this occasion they come here and in the name of the Almighty God they invoke his vengeance upon us for our action on a political measure. Let three thousand citizens of New England, or three hundred thousand, or all of New England, come here and, as citizens of the United States, protest as is their right against any legislative action, and their protest will be treated respectfully. But these men do not come here as citizens; they come here as ministers of God - his vice gerents, as the Senator from Texas said, or vice-regents, as he probably meant - and as servants of their Divine Master, and in his name protest against a great moral wrong, which they as ministers of the Gospel declare to be committed by an act of this body. He objected to the receipt of a memorial couched in such terms, and professing to speak by any such authority. Without any disrespect for the cloth, which to say the least, they do not grace, he moved, as the proper course, that the memorial be not received.

Mr. Butler said he had always entertained the highest respect for the ministers of the Gospel. His respect was so high that he would almost submit to their rebuke for an act performed in his official capacity. But that respect was for them in their

appropriate and sacred calling; and when they abandoned their duty and descended from their high position - when they forgot the religion of the Lamb, and mingled with the waters of the turbid pool of political strife, his respect no longer continued. These memorialists have quitted the pulpit and have taken their place in the political arena, and they speak as vice regents of God on earth and presume in His name solemnly to pronounce upon the Senate the judgment of the Almighty. He could no longer respect them when they themselves abandoned their sacred duties. When they had abandoned the religion which they professed - the religion which was typified by the meek and lowly Lamb and took up the character of the political lion, going round, seeking whom they might devour, they do violence to the gospel and the religion of our Savior. He knew not what more was to be done than that Senators should express their condemnation of this proceeding. He thought they deserved the censure of the Senate.

Mr. Pettit of Ia., said he was in favor of the largest liberty to petition, provided they were respectful. His first objection to the memorial was that it was out of time and too late to affect any action on that bill, which had passed the Senate, in all probability never to return. The Senate had done the deed, and now deserved the righteous judgment of heaven. It would seem that this righteous judgment meant pains, torment, and punishments; but he expected it would be one full of approval for the deed. The Senator from South Carolina said he had great respect for clergymen so long as their robes were unspotted, and they did not dabble in polluted waters or the pool of politics. He would agree with the Senator if he thought the pool of politics was any more polluted than the stagnant waters of contradictory theology in which these clergymen lived. He believed the pool of politics far more pellucid, clear, healthy, and beneficial than the stagnant waters which surrounded the contradictory

creeds and dogmas of these men, no two of whom could agree upon any particular point of theology. The Senate had an officer chosen for his ability and information, who was a brother clergyman, whose duty it was to expound divine law to the Senate, and he would therefore, if motion be in order, move to refer this memorial to the Rev. Henry Slicer, Chaplain of the Senate, with instructions to inquire and report to the Senate whether the Nebraska bill was a violation of the law of God, and whether the Senate was in danger of having invoked the judgment and condemnation of Heaven in passing it. (Loud laughter). If Mr. Slicer decided in the affirmative, he would be willing to revoke his action and would use his endeavors to induce the House to send the bill back to the Senate. Mr. Douglas said the abolition address put forth by members of Congress had called upon the ministers of the Gospel to rise and abuke this bill as a violation of plighted faith, etc., and clergymen, in obedience to that call, were engaged in getting up protests founded upon the false statements contained in that address. These memorialists says - ”We in the name of the Almighty God, protest”, etc. What was this assumption of the name and the power of the Almighty, but an attempt to establish in this country the doctrine that the clergy have the supreme right to determine and pronounce the will of God on all subjects; and particularly in relation to the political action of Congress? It was an attempt to set up a theocracy. It was an attempt to put the legislation of the country in the hands and under the control of the church. No bolder attempt than this was ever made by any church in the most despotic countries or in the darkest ages of the world, to enforce the doctrine that it was the privilege of the church to tell the people that, not only on religious subjects, but also upon all political ones, they must receive as the divine will whatever they received from the Church. If this pretention of the clergy be now sanctioned, all questions must be referred to the clergy for approval before Congress shall act. The memorial purports to speak in the

name of the Almighty, and in that name protests against the bill. It tells Congress plainly that the gates of heaven are closed unless we obey the behests of the abolitionists. He had great respect for clergymen, and for their calling. He had no doubt but these memorialists were men of learning, intelligence, and respectability; but he was sure that there could not be found throughout the country any other body of men of equal number who had more ignorance upon this one subject upon which they now protested. How many of them had ever read the history of the act of 1820? Not one. How many of them had ever read the history and the votes of the Northern States repudiating at the time of the adoption of that very act? Not one. How many of them had ever read the votes and proceedings of the Act of 1850? Not one. Yet they profess to speak the will of God upon a subject in relation to which they are professionally ignorant. They speak of the sanctity of national engagements. Did any one of these three thousand preachers tell their people in 1850 when the fugitive slave law was resisted by force that it was their duty to obey it on the ground that it was a national engagement of the constitution of the United States? Not one. Did they tell their people that the Senate did right in passing that act, and in carrying out a national engagement? Not one. If it was part of the duty of these three thousand clergymen to speak about the sanctity of national engagements, where were they in 1850, when in Boston the law was openly resisted by force? They were silent. But now at the bidding of the abolition junta in Congress they come forward and arraign the Senate of the United States in the name of the Almighty. He cared nothing personally for this or many other insults caused by the addresses of abolition confederates. He could bide his time; the day would come when not a man could be found who would say he ever was opposed to the great American principle of self-government.

Middletown, N.Y.,
April 1, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 50 - 58

MANUFACTURED SERMONS

“Rev. Dr. Demarest, one of the leading clergymen of the Dutch Church, left a very eligible charge in Newark, N.J., to settle in Chicago. One of the main reasons for leaving Newark was that he had ten years’ labor, in the form of sermons, of which he was desirous of availing himself. But alas! Literary wealth will take to itself wings. The car of the American Express Company, in which were his clothes and sermons, took fire, and all were consumed.”

Exchange Paper.

What a disaster to the Rev. Doctor! Did any of the apostles ever experience the like? Only think, ten years labor in manufacturing sermons, and only ten years salary realized from them; and that perhaps at the starvation rate of a few thousand dollars per annum! And just as the Doctor was moving them to a new market, without one shilling insurance on them, either in heaven or earth, in one fearful hour, alas! they are all dissolved in smoke. We suggest to the Doctor that he import from Holland or Germany a few barrels of Fire Proof Dutch Reformed Sermons, which can be bought very cheap in the old country; and as there is but very little *weight* in them, the cost of importation will not be much. Should our plan *take,* the Doctor could still fill his contract with the clever people of Chicago; and in consideration of the Doctor’s misfortune, we will charge him nothing for the suggestion.

Middletown, N.Y.
March 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Page 311

MANY INSTRUCTORS, BUT FEW FATHERS.

There is a sense in which the disciples of Christ are forbidden to call any man on earth their father. In Matthew 23:8-10, our Savior, in speaking to the multitude, and to his disciples, said, “But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters; for one is your Master, even Christ.” Although we are told in the first verse of this chapter that Jesus spake to the multitude and to his disciples, we can clearly distinguish which part of his sayings were for the multitude, and which for his disciples; for he denounced the former as scribes, pharisees and hypocrites, while of the latter he says, “All ye are brethren.” The admonitions and instructions are for the brethren; and their attention is called to a well known practice among the Jewish hypocrites of that age, of giving flattering titles to each other, calling them Fathers, Rabbis, or Masters, and ascribing to men honor and dominion which the saints are forbidden to ascribe to any but God. We are not to infer from this prohibition that as children of the flesh, the disciples were to repudiate the paternal relationship of their earthly progenitors, for that would be a violation of the divine law they were then under, commanding them to honor their father and their mother, &c. Nor can we construe this command so as to conflict with the sense in which the apostles have used the terms father and fathers, in designating the peculiar gifts which God has set in the church, as the family and household of God; for then John, and Paul and Peter would be found among the transgressors. It is important then that we closely and carefully consider in what sense we are to call no man on earth our father; and in

what sense the apostle Paul could claim the appellation among the Corinthians, and enjoin on Timothy, and through him, on the churches, that the elders should be entreated as fathers, and the younger as brethren. See I Cor. 4:15, and I Tim. 6:1. As the apostles were inspired by the Holy Ghost to expound to us all the laws, ordinances, doctrine and institutions of Christ, we must regard all their decisions perfectly harmonious with the true import of every precept uttered by our Lord to his disciples. If in any case there seems to be the least want of harmony between the words of Christ and his apostles, we may, rest assured that we have failed to comprehend the true intent and meaning of their words. How then, the inquiry may arise, could Paul claim the saints at Corinth, and Timothy, and Titus, and Onesimus, as his children, and Peter speak of those who have fallen asleep, as fathers, {II Peter 3:4} and John distinguish among those to whom he wrote, some as fathers, and claim them all as his little children, without transgressing the law of Christ as recorded in Matt. 23:9, "And call no man your father upon the earth; for one is your Fatter, which is in heaven?"

Clearly the sense in which our Lord forbids us to apply the word to any man, is that implying spiritual paternity, which can only be lawfully ascribed to God. Our spiritual, immortal and eternal life could only come from him, and it is not lawful to ascribe it to any other being. "Of his own will hath he begotten us with the word of truth." James 1:18. " But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12,13. Here is a sufficient reason why we should not accredit our sonship and heirship to any man. First, because it would be false; for none have power to become the sons of God by blood, or the will of the flesh, or of man, and only by the will and power of God; and secondly, because it is idolatry to ascribe to any other being

or power, that which belongs exclusively to God. In this sense one, and but one is our Father. As the members of the body of Christ, our sonship is in his Sonship. He is the only begotten of the Father, and all his members are and were begotten in him, and the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, is our God and Father, as he has said. "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." John 20:17. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren; Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." Heb. 2:11,12. From these considerations it is forbidden as sacrilegious and idolatrous to ascribe our heavenly birth or our sonship to blood, or to the will or works of men. No system of means or instrumentalities, nor will, nor works of men, can possibly beget or produce for us the relationship of sons of God; and to ascribe that relationship to any other being, thing or power, is an attempt to rob God of his glory, and to deceive the credulous children of men. The multitude of carnal Jews, scribes, pharisees and hypocrites which were present, were accustomed to look upon and to speak of Abraham, Moses and others, as giving them a right to be regarded as the people of God. They claimed the right of baptism of John, because Abraham was their father; and boasted on another occasion that they were Moses' disciples. And to this day it is common among the carnal professors of religion to attribute what they call their religions conversion, to some revivalist, or to some being, power or thing short of God. But they are of another family. All whom Jesus denominates brethren, have one Father, are all begotten of him, of his own will, and with the word of truth; and they being all taught of God, know better than to give his glory to another, or his praise to images. They will not ascribe their heavenly birth and divine relation as sons of God to any being or thing, but to God himself; hence, in this sense they will call no man on earth their father.

Let us now consider in what sense the apostles speak of fathers in the church of God. In writing to the Corinthians, Paul says, in the first epistle, 4:15, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." This declaration without close investigation would seem to conflict with what we have been considering of Christ's words in Matt. 23:9; but if correctly understood they must harmonize. We have attempted to show that Christ was speaking of the quickening, life-giving power of God, by which we are begotten and brought into manifestation as the sons of God and heirs of immortality, by making manifest in us that eternal life which was with the Father, and was given us in his Son. But Paul is speaking of what we are as the quickened and organized church and body of Christ. "For though ye have ten thousand instructors *in Christ*," {that is, in the church, which is his body, which is called by his name} "yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus {that is, in the organized body, the church} I have begotten you through the gospel." While Paul would claim no part in the work of quickening the saints, or in the regeneration of the body of Christ, in which body God has chosen all the members before the foundation of the world, yet he could and did with great propriety transfer "these things" in a figure to himself and to Apollos. See verse six. And among those things transferred to himself and Apollos, he mentions first that they were to be accounted as stewards of the mysteries of God; as he has said, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." II Cor.4:7. But he firmly repudiates that paternity against which Christ warned his disciples, by demanding of these Corinthians, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." I

Cor. 3:5-7. He charges them with carnality, in attributing to him, or to Apollos, or Cephas, the authorship of their vitality; and reminds them that Paul was not crucified for them, neither were they baptized in the name of Paul. This shows very conclusively that he did not claim or accept the appellation, *father*, in any sense forbidden by Christ, or implying that they had received their immortality from him. But the question returns, In what sense did he beget them in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Paul does not assume that he had begotten them or any of them into Christ Jesus; for God the Father had chosen and created them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. Paul found them already in Christ, and ministered to them as the members of Christ. And in the relation which he as an apostle sustained to them as being already in Christ, he imparted to them that instruction and comfort which was committed to him for their special benefit. He was a minister, by whom they believed. That is, God their Father in heaven, having quickened them by his Holy Spirit, had circumcised their hearts and ears that they might hear and treasure up the testimony of the gospel. Paul so proclaimed and expounded that testimony to them that they understood it, received it, and abode in it. As the eternal life of all the church was hid in God, and by him in due time communicated to the saints in their spiritual birth; so the inspired truth of the gospel was committed to Paul, and to Apollos and Cephas, and others had this treasure in them as earthen vessels, and by their ministry it was imparted to the understanding of the quickened children of God. It is in this figurative sense we understand the apostle Paul had through the gospel, through its ministry, begotten them; or in other words, had imparted to them that clear understanding of the truth as it is in Jesus, which was before made known to him by special revelation.

But it was our design to notice the distinction which the apostle makes between instructors and fathers. The former

seems to have been numerous, but the latter very few. Perhaps all the members in the church of God may instruct others to some extent; for a measure of the Spirit and of spiritual gifts is given to every one, to profit with all the other members. God has set the members in the body as it hath pleased him, and to every member some gift for mutual edification, so that no one member can say to a fellow member of the same body, I have no need of thee. So we perceive that in the church there are a diversity of gifts, but all by one spirit, all useful in the place where God has placed them. The beloved John recognized this diversity of gifts in the church as addressed by him, fathers and young men, and little children, but all belonging to the household of God, and all required to make up the family. Most unquestionably among ministers of Christ, some who are eminently qualified to instruct the saints lack the peculiar gift of paternal sympathy, fatherly care and solicitude which Paul so abundantly possessed. In modern times, some whose gifts for instructing the saints have seemed remarkably brilliant, and whose usefulness in the ministry as evangelists, or itinerant preachers, has been great, have developed but little qualification for the pastoral oversight of the flock; while others of no more ability for expounding the scriptures, so as to edify and instruct the saints, are peculiarly gifted with those paternal qualifications so vitally important in fitting them to take the oversight of the flock. Some are far more accessible to the weak and trembling lambs, than others, being evidently designed for the pastoral work.

It was in reference to this, we think, that the apostle made the distinction between instructors and fathers. There were in the primitive church elders who ruled well, and some who labored in word and doctrine; not than any of them were permitted to make laws, or dictate rules, but they ruled well who kept before the saints the rule which Christ has given for the government of the church. And we infer that there were

some administered the gospel rule, besides those who labored in word and doctrine. And there were elders which were to be honored for their work sake above others. Some to be entreated as fathers, and others as brethren, on a perfect level with the rest of the church. In the primitive or apostolic state of the church, we have the pattern of what the church should be throughout all subsequent time. Our ascended King has received gifts, and has given gifts to the church. " And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. 4:11-13.

Middletown, N.Y.
April 1, 1870.
Elder Gilbert Beebe

MARK IX. 50.

“Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.” – Mark ix. 50.

An explanation of the above passage, through our columns, has been requested by a friend in Pennsylvania. The preceding verse reads thus: “For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.” Doctor Gill has favored the idea that the salting with fire has reference to the fire of hell, into which the enemies of God shall finally be cast: but he has not informed us in what manner he has avoided the doctrine of universal damnation, which seems to be implied in his view of the subject. How everyone shall be salted with the fire of hell, and yet some escape the vengeance of eternal fire through the blood and righteousness of the Redeemer, involves a paradox of no easy solution. And if the fire of hell, in the sense in which the doctor has defined it, be the salt intended in the text, it is hard to comprehend how such salt is good, and how it may lose its saltness, or why the disciples were charged to have salt in themselves.

The whole discourse of our Lord mentioned in the connection of the text, was addressed to the twelve disciples whom our Lord named apostles, and the same unto whom he had said, Mathew v. 13: “Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.” These disciples had been disputing among themselves upon a subject which is hardly settled yet among some of the disciples of our Lord, viz: “Who should be the greatest.” And a reaching after power which did not belong to them, was detected in the answer of John, that he

and his colleagues had forbidden one whom they found casting out devils, because he followed not them. Occasion was afforded for our Lord to instruct them concerning the order of his kingdom. In these instructions he informed them that "If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all." He also, as we understand this subject, instructed them how order should be preserved in his kingdom, among the members of the body, or church. The members of the church are set as the members of the human body, and each to supply its appropriate place, so that the head may not say to the foot, I have no need of thee, nor can the ear say, Because I am not the eye I am not of the body; "For as the body is one, and bath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," &c. – 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13. Keeping in view this figurative description of the church, the discipline shall dispose of offenders in the church, without respect to the stations which they may occupy. When Judas, who was one of the twelve to whom these instructions were given, should offend, he was to be cut off, and cast out as salt that had lost its savor, and his having had part of the ministry, being numbered with the apostles should not entitle him to the fellowship of the saints any longer than he walked according to the order of the gospel. And if Paul or an angel from heaven should preach to the body, any other gospel than that which had been preached, let him be accursed or cast out. However important their standing in the church, when any offend by any departure from the laws of Christ, or from time faith once delivered to the saints, they are to be dealt with according to the rule. By the expression "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed, &c., than having two hands [or a perfect set of members], to be cast into hell," we are not to understand that the church will enter into her ultimate glory with spots, blemishes, or imperfections; or that she is liable to sink down to the perdition of the ungodly,

by her connection with disaffected members here; for such a conclusion would seriously conflict with the plain testimony of the scriptures. “All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” – John vi. And, “I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.” – John x. 27. Salt is good; literally speaking it is very useful to season our food, and to preserve from putrefaction that unto which it is applied. So the apostles of the Lamb, and all the members of Christ’s mystical body are useful, and the gifts on them bestowed are for, the comfort and edification of the church of God. “Ye are the salt of the earth.” For the elect’s sake the world standeth, the wheels of nature continue to revolve, and shall continue until all the elect be gathered into the fold of Christ. But, they are the salt in reference to their connection with the body of Christ, preserving the pure testimony of truth, when and where the body is in danger of being corrupted by false doctrine, or unauthorized institutions.

As salt acts upon flesh to preserve it, so the gifts of the Spirit act upon the church to preserve her from the corrupting influence of the doctrines of men and of devils, with which she must frequently come in contact. And that spiritual food on which the saints are fed, is seasoned through the gifts by which it is communicated to them. They receive it with a peculiar relish when delivered in its simplicity, as the Holy Ghost giveth utterance to his messengers. But if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? The question arises, if the apostles and ministers of Christ, in possession of the gifts conferred on them by the Holy Ghost for the edification of the body of Christ, be the salt, how can they lose their savor or saltness unless they fall from grace, according to the doctrines of arminians? To which we may reply, that when such ministers of Christ depart either from the testimony of the truth or from the order of the gospel, they lose their savory usefulness to the church of God: “I

keep my body under," says Paul, "lest while I preach to others, myself become a castaway." Not a castaway from the inheritance which he possessed in Christ Jesus his Lord; for he was persuaded that neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor things present or to come, should be able to separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus his Lord; but a castaway from his usefulness in the church. To illustrate, let us suppose that Paul, instead of warring with hi flesh, and keeping his body under, had indulged in the lusts of the flesh; had gratified the depraved appetite of nature, and eaten and drank with the drunken; had become disorderly in his conduct, a railer, a striker, a brawler, a drunkard, or an heretic, could he continue as a useful minister of Christ, and an example to the flock under such circumstances? By no means: for the Lord had given charge, that if the right hand, or right eye should offend, it must be cut off and cast away from the fellowship of the church, or, if not, the whole body would be involved in hell fire. By hell fire in this case we understand the same as that mentioned by James iii. 6: "And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell." into this description of hell fire, or tormenting strife and disorder, the whole body of the church must be plunged when she would retain in her connection those who walk not circumspectly, who conform not to the spirit and doctrine of the gospel. How many instances of this kind have our churches witnessed in these last days! Members who have held important stations in the body, as right hands, or right eyes; hands to labor and bear the burdens of fatigue and toil; eyes for discernment, penetration, wisdom, &c., and because they have been so very useful in the church, they have been suffered to bring in heresies and corruptions, without feeling the lash of discipline: the notion has been indulged in that they cannot be spared; if we withdraw our fellowship from them we shall lack their hands to labor

among us; we shall suffer for want of eyes to see with; as we were wont to depend on them for counsel, &c.: therefore they have been sustained in connection with the church like members of the natural body when mortified, until infection of the limb has reached the vitals and thrown dire confusion into every part of the church. The King himself has decided that it is better to cut off such right hands, pluck out such right eyes, than that the whole church be plunged into such disorder and fire of hell.

Salt may become unsavory by accumulating filth, so that instead of seasoning our food it would ruin it; and instead of preserving that to which it is applied, it would render it unfit for use. Even so it is with those who are denominated the salt of the earth, when they depart from the truth and are turned unto fables; when they cease to preach the doctrine of Christ, and preach for doctrine the commandments of men; when they cease to preach the gospel, and labor to sustain the institutions of men, they have lost their saltness; their preaching becomes insipid to the saints; it is sickening, having no savory relish: and for this cause many are sickly among the churches, and some have fallen asleep. And when such is the case – when those who have preached Christ crucified, with whom we have taken sweet counsel, become disorderly in their conduct or corrupt in their public improvements, their savor being lost, wherewith will ye season it? The lack of saltness in this sense cannot be supplied by anything we may provide. There is nothing in the world that can supply the place of salt: nor can any doctrine be in vented which will feed, comfort, edify and build up the saints of God in the absence of the gospel of the blessed Savior. “It is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men.” Our Lord has shown that it is hazardous to the peace of the church to retain them in fellowship; they must be cast out, and even in the world, or in anti-christian connection with the world, if they are

subjects of grace, they are good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men. The world or worldly churches have but little or no use for them, and they are destined to learn that the way of transgressors is hard. We could give numerous instances which are within our knowledge for illustration, such as a Grennell, a Ball, a Matthias, a Judas, and a thousand others who having lost their savor as ministers of Christ, have become detached from the church of God, and are now trodden under foot of the swine among whom they mingle. Christians can no longer hear them preach with satisfaction or edification, and the world have men to whom they give the preference, so that those who have observed lying vanities, find by sad experience, that they have forsaken their own mercies.

Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another. Let the truth of God dwell richly in the hearts of his people, his ministers and all who stand in connection with the church of God. Be not carried about by divers and strange doctrines. "Abide in me," says Christ: as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, neither can his disciples bear fruit except they abide in him as their living Vine. Try the spirits – prove all things; and, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God's speed." And as the peace and fellowship of the saints is predicated on the reception of the apostles' doctrine and fellowship – so, in pursuing the course marked out by the great Apostle and High Priest of our profession, the saints shall have peace one with another.

Before we close our remarks it may be proper to offer a few observations on the verse preceding the text we have under consideration. "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." God has chosen his people in the furnace of affliction, and Peter has exhorted them not to think it strange concerning the fiery trials which

are to try them: it is the common lot of all God's people. The Sun of Righteousness is like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap; and he shall sit as a Refiner and Purifier of silver: and he shall purify the Sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness. – Mal. iii. 2, 3.

As salt is intended to preserve and keep from putrefaction that unto which it is applied, so are the fiery trials which the saints endure calculated to refine them – burn up their pollution and dross, their hay, wood and stubble, that they may be saved so as by fire. Every one of the children of God shall realize the saving benefits of that refining fire which is ordained to purify the sons of Levi: and these fiery trials are as salutary in their effects on the children of God, as salt is literally when applied to our provisions. Every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. The saints being by fire salted, preserved from confidence in the flesh – from all alloy, shall offer their offerings or sacrifices in righteousness, or salted with salt. Our Lord seems to allude to the law concerning offering, Lev. ii. 13: "And every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt; neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy meat offering; with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." The offerings of the saints, when offered in righteousness shall be offered as the law directs, and as typified by the offerings under the ceremonial law. As the bodies of the saints are to be presented as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which of our reasonable service, they must be kept under: we are to walk circumspectly, in. all the ordinances of the house of God blameless, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Our sacrifices of thanksgiving, the incense of our prayers and devotion before the Lord must be salted with the rich savor of the spiritual gifts bestowed upon the saints.

New Vernon, N. Y.,
April 1, 1843

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 248 – 254

MARK X. 14; LUKE XVIII. 16.

"Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God."

We are unable to discover anything in this passage inharmonious with the views expressed in the twenty-third number of our last volume, on the subject of the salvation of infants. To our mind this text, when properly understood, will confirm the sentiments therein expressed. The occasion on which these words were spoken by our Lord, was not one in which he was setting forth the way of salvation. The people which gathered around our Lord, were bringing their little children or infants to Christ, not to have them baptized nor rantized, but we are informed in the context that the object of those who brought their children to him was that he would touch them. Who they were who brought their children, or what benefit they hoped to secure for their little ones, from his touching them, we are not informed; but we presume that, like the diseased woman who sought to touch the hem of his garment that she might be healed of her infirmity, they believed that a virtue would be communicated by the touch which would secure to them some blessing either temporal or spiritual. But the disciples rebuked them. From this circumstance it would seem that those who brought their children were not disciples, but whether they were or not, they were rebuked by the disciples, who seemed to regard it as an annoyance, and rebuked them. Mark says, "When Jesus saw it," (that is, when he saw the conduct of the disciples,) "he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer little children to come unto me." It was somewhat presuming in the disciples, in the presence of the Master, without any authority from him, to rebuke those who brought their children to him. This may serve as an admonition to us all as disciples of the Redeemer, to avoid the assumption of

authority which he has not vested in us. It becomes us as his disciples to always remember that it is his to command, and ours to obey. In the text we have two express and positive commands laid down for the government of the disciples of Christ, for unto them as such the text is addressed. Both of these commands enjoin the duty on the disciples to be passive, in regard to children's coming to Christ; and the reason why they should be passive is given also, namely: "For of such is the kingdom of God." It would be exceedingly difficult to infer from these words a duty to interfere in the matter of bringing or preventing them from coming, much less to infer an obligation to baptize or rantize them. Christ has informed us that no man can come unto him except the Father, which sent him, draw them; and all such as are drawn to him by the Father, he will raise up at the last day. Hence it is a matter over which his disciples have no power or control. They can neither facilitate nor hinder any from coming to Christ, either infants or adults, who are drawn to him by the Father, for the same power is displayed in drawing them to him that was displayed in sending the Savior into the world. As none but God the Father had the power and the right to send his Son into the world to save sinners, so none but God has the power or right to draw sinners, old or young, unto him. And as they have no power to draw them, they are equally destitute of power to oppose their coming to him, when drawn or brought to him. It is indeed a matter in which they are not allowed to interfere. There can be no danger that any of God's chosen people should fail to come to Christ, for he has positively assured us, that "All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." The work of salvation is so ordered and established in the counsel and decree of God, that neither men nor angels shall share with God in the work, nor divide with him the glory resulting from it. He will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

even every one of them that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory; I have formed him, yea, I have made him.

The reason assigned by our Lord for commanding them to be passive is, when duly understood, a very weighty one. “For of such is the kingdom of God.” If he had said to them, For of such shall be the kingdom of God, they might have inferred that the kingdom of God was not yet established, that the subjects of it were not yet known, and that there was some blank in regard to its establishment, yet to be filled up. But the kingdom of God was prepared from the foundation of the world. God’s King is set upon his holy hill of Zion. His throne is forever and ever. It is from everlasting to everlasting. All his subjects were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. “The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.” And as he only, knoweth them that are his, or them that are of this spiritual kingdom, none others are qualified to decide who shall or who shall not come to the Redeemer. The disciples can only know who they are as he makes them manifest. They could not therefore be competent to supervise the matter by forbidding any, whether old or young, to come unto him. But as the words of our Lord are full of wisdom and instruction, we may learn that besides impressing the disciples with a sense of their incompetency to judge and decide who may or may not come to Christ, or who are and who are not of the kingdom of God, we learn two other important truths:

First, that there are some such children in the kingdom of God, as those whom he had taken in his arms, laid his hands upon, and blessed. “For of such is the kingdom of God.” Those whom he has blessed are blessed for evermore; and, on this occasion at least, he blessed some who were literally

little children. As in the article in the twenty-third number of the last volume, we proved by the testimony of the Scriptures, that all the human family, young and old, are by nature children of wrath; that all have sinned, and are therefore mortal; that if they were not sinners they could not die, neither could they be saved by the mediation of Christ, if they were not sinners, for he came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. His name is called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins; it is therefore fully demonstrated that infants, in order to be saved, must be redeemed by Christ, and born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of the Lord, which liveth and abideth forever. And we now reiterate the declaration we before made, and which cannot be successfully contradicted, that the doctrine held by the Old School Baptists is the only doctrine preached among men that can possibly embrace the salvation of infants, or of any others.

Second, "Qf such is the kingdom of God." All who belong to the kingdom or God, are brought experimentally into it by being born again, in which birth they are converted and become as little children. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And in connection with our text Christ said, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." - Mark x. 15. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." - John xiii. 17. Let us seriously consider this important asseveration of our Lord Jesus Christ. What awful considerations hang upon these words. No man can enter the kingdom of God in any other way than as a little child. Then, instead of infants being debarred from salvation because they are infants, and unable to do anything to procure salvation, all adults, in order to be saved, must become as little children. What is there then peculiar to little children, which is so very important to qualify us for a reception of the

kingdom, that none without it can in any wise enter without it? Is it free will, free agency, or human ability to comply with terms, conditions and overtures? We think there are none who will take that position. Little children are helpless, artless, dependent, without wisdom or ability to help themselves, and therefore entirely dependent on protectors for support and safety; let it be remembered that all who are born of God, taught by his Spirit, and brought by grace into the experimental enjoyment of the kingdom of God, must be reduced to a sense of their entire inability and helplessness, with no more power or wisdom of their own to rely upon, than the little child has for its own protection or support. As we are all by nature under the infatuation that we have sufficient power to determine our own destiny, we must be converted from that delusion; be slain to all our confidence in the flesh, and taught of God to know that we are poor, guilty, condemned sinners, totally destitute of ability to will or to do anything towards our own deliverance. They are made to feel, to know, and to confess that if they are not saved by a strong, sovereign and almighty power, they are lost forever. When born of God, that meek, quiet, confiding, childlike spirit, which is peculiar to all the saints of God, is implanted in them, and under its benign influence they seek for a lowly place in the kingdom of God. They do not feel to enter the place of broad rivers and streams as a galley with oars, propelling themselves along by works, nor as the gallant ship in full trim, with canvas all spread out to the breeze; but stripped completely of its canvas, spars and rigging, of all its oars and self-propelling instruments, as the little, passive, helpless, dependent child enters into natural life, so enters the heaven-born child of God into the kingdom which is, and was, prepared for him from the foundation of the world. Now we ask, Is not this method of salvation alone by grace, perfectly adapted to all the redeemed family of God, whether infants or adults? The tall, the wise, the noble and the mighty men of this world, are quite as helpless and dependent for

their salvation as the infant, the heathen, or the idiot. What other doctrine except that held by the old fashioned Baptists, and advocated in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, presents any hope for the helpless, the lost and the ruined of mankind? This childlike condition not only qualifies Zion's converts to enter, but also to dwell in the kingdom. "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."

When the disciples of our Lord were at one time inflated with vain ambition, and inquired which of them was to be greatest in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord set a little child in their midst, "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."—Matt. Xviii. 3-6.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 415 - 420

MARK XIII. 32.

“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”

As we do not feel competent, we shall not attempt to explain what seems to be hidden in the remarkable declaration of the text, but we will simply give such views as we have upon the subject, which if not satisfactory in settling all the queries which may be suggested, we hope may be edifying as far as they go.

The first inquiry suggested to our mind by the text, is the day and the hour alluded to. By comparing the thirteenth chapter of Mark with the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, we learn that three questions had been submitted by the disciples to our Lord, immediately after he had predicted the destruction of the buildings of the temple in Jerusalem, which were thus presented privately to Christ, as he sat upon the Mount of Olives. “Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” The version of Mark reads, “Tell us when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign when all these things shall be fulfilled?” The latter version seems to comprise the last two questions, as stated by Matthew in one, and make the coming of Christ which is alluded to, and the fulfillment of all things spoken of, as meaning precisely the same thing, and the same hour.

Whether the design of the disciples was to ask concerning the coming of Christ in the display of his power to overthrow the buildings of the temple, destroy Jerusalem, and execute the righteous judgments of God upon that devoted city, or to inquire of him concerning his second coming in all the power and glory of the Father, personally, to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day, has been a matter of some

serious doubt with many of the Lord’s people. From the statement of the two evangelists, we are inclined to consider the signs of Christ’s coming, to extend from the period of Christ’s resurrection from the dead and ascension in heaven, throughout the gospel dispensation, and until his final coming in the clouds of heaven, at the last day. The signs of his coming are like the signs of the approach of summer, when we see the trees in blossom, with such other indications as are usual to usher in that season of the year. And when the disciples should see the predictions of their Savior being fulfilled, in the destruction of Jerusalem, and in the development of the abomination that maketh desolate, standing in the holy, or once consecrated place, as in all other evidences which he would give them of his exaltation and power, both in the days of the primitive saints, and down to the end of time, every manifestation, shall be to them a sign in conformation of the assurance which he has given them that he will surely come, according to his word, and receive them to himself to dwell with him in glory, forever and ever. If any object to this application of the subject, let such inform us, what less than this can be implied in the fulfillment of all these things? We admit the words, “these things,” restrict the inquiry to the things of which they were speaking; and if it can be satisfactorily established that the questions proposed by the disciples only referred to the literal destruction of Jerusalem, then we are not at liberty to apply it to the final consummation of all things. But if the end of the world, in their inquiry, means the same end, which is mentioned in 1 Corinthians xv. 24, and elsewhere in the word, we are right in our application of it to Christ’s final coming, when he shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on the ungodly and to be admired of all who love his appearing.

“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man.” No man can calculate by any data within their reach, when it shall come.

Whether the subject related to the end of the Jerusalem which then was, or to the end of this world, no man was able to tell the day nor hour, in either case. Had the intelligent Jews been able, by observation or calculation, to have determined the time and circumstances of their destruction, they would not have flattered themselves, as Josephus informs us they did, that God would deliver them, until the very last. When famine and pestilence raged within their walls, when the Roman army surrounded their city, when devouring flames enveloped their temple, and when reduced to the necessity of eating the flesh of one another, no terms of capitulation offered by Titus, the Roman Commander who was desirous to save the city, would be accepted by the infatuated Jews. If no man knew or could tell the hour of the overthrow of Jerusalem, is it reasonable to believe that any man can tell when the end of the world shall come? Yet there are many who have attempted to fix upon the day and the hour, and to demonstrate by mathematical calculation when the end shall come. But the charge which Christ on this occasion gave to the disciples is still applicable to the saints, "Take heed lest any man deceive you." False prophets, like Miller, and others, may attempt to demonstrate by scripture references or rather by their construction of the Scriptures, when that day and hour shall come; but believe them not. Your Lord and Master assures you that they do not know. Astronomers may also try their skill, to demonstrate by the fixed laws of nature, when the end shall be, but no man knoweth, neither is it known by the angels in heaven, however superior they may be in intelligence to the sons of men, and whatever may have been confided to them; this mystery they cannot solve.

But the most remarkable expression of our text is the declaration, *"neither the Son, but the Father."* Or as stated by Matthew, *"but my Father only."* By this declaration, we simply understand that the precise time appointed in the

counsel and purpose of God for the execution of what was alluded to in our subject, was not a matter of revelation; and as there is no medium of revelation from God to us, of the things which concern the spiritual kingdom but Jesus Christ, who is the Head in all things to his church, it is not committed as yet to the church, even in her Head, but held as a profound secret in the mind of the Father only. But because Christ is one with his church, as her Mediatorial Head, and in that character could say that the day and hour was not known to him, we do not infer that he is in anywise less or inferior to the Father in his eternal Godhead, or in his perfect knowledge of all things. For in him are "hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*" - Col. ii. 3. We should remember that he not only sustains the relation of identity with the church, which is his body, and the fullness of him that filleth all in all, but he is also one with the Father, and identified in the eternal, uncreated and self-existent Godhead. In his Godhead all things are naked and open to his eye, and he declares the end from the beginning, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, while as the Days-Man, or Mediator between God and men, he can say as recorded, Rev. i. 1-3, "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: who bear record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ and of all things that he saw."

In conclusion, we will call attention to the words of the apostles to the church of the Thessalonians, in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ, "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come

except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son or perdition." - 2 Thess. ii. 1-3. "And to you who are troubled, rest with us; when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." - 2 Thess. i. 7-10.

Middletown, N.Y.
August 1, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 7 - 10

MARK 15:38

Brother Beebe: The Lord has laid his afflicting hand upon me in removing my companion, and I am left to struggle through this unfriendly world alone. But his promise is, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." I have witnessed the faithfulness of this assurance; for he has been a present help in time of need; but I feel very unworthy of his mercy. Dear Brother, all the preaching I have is through the "Signs of the Times." I wish you would favor me with a short sermon on Mark *15:38.* "And the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom." I requested your views on a passage of scripture last year, but did not receive them. Brother Beebe, pray for me, that I may be resigned to the will of God, who doeth all things well.

Elizabeth Brice.
Junius, N.Y.
March 13, 1864.

Reply: We have many more applications made to us for our views on the scriptures than we are able to comply with, sometimes because we have no satisfactory views to present, and sometimes for want of time to write, or space to insert such views as we have. We feel a pleasure however in receiving the applications of those who are searching after the truth, and in doing the best we can to edify and enlighten our readers to the extent of such ability as the Lord may bestow on us; and truly, without him we can do nothing.

The subject proposed by sister Brice for consideration is full of solemn and thrilling interest to all who hope for salvation through the atoning blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The miracles wrought by our Savior in the days of his flesh gave unquestionable outward demonstration of his Messiahship; as Nicodemus frankly acknowledged, "We know that thou art a

teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him (John 3:2).” So also the amazing display of divine power in the convulsion of nature when Jesus was crucified caused even his murderers to cry out in astonishment, “Surely this was the Son of God.” The quaking earth, the rending rocks, the opening graves, the rising dead, the darkened skies, as well as the rending veil; appealed most irresistibly to the intelligence of mankind, in vindication of the divine character and commission of the Redeemer. While the faith of the children of God looks not on the things which are seen, but on things which are not seen; the credentials of the Messiahship of the Son of God, to the world lying in wickedness, were made tangible to the natural intellect of men who are destitute of the vital principle of faith by outward and visible things. The faith of those who have the faith of the Son of God does not live on the visible things which are seen and comprehended by natural men, but they by that faith endure as seeing him who is invisible (Hebrews 11:27). Jews, legalists, and Arminians require a sign, or visible evidences; but the faith of the Son of God is to all who possess it the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. As an exposure of the deep depravity of fallen man, the miracles were performed that their true state and condition might be demonstrated. “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father (John 15:24). ”That is, they would have had no exposure or conviction of their sins; but now they have no cloak for their sin.

It is worthy of our serious reflection that Christ frequently, in his contentions with the unbelieving Jews, referred to the demonstration that should be given of his identity as the Son of God when he should be put to death; as, for instance in John 8:28, “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he,” etc. This saying was so fully

verified that they were constrained to acknowledge: “This was the Son of God.”

But among the fearfully grand and convincing evidences given at his crucifixion, or when he was lifted up, we are called now to consider that of the veil being then and there rent in twain from the top to the bottom. Without any reference to the sacred character or figurative significance of the veil, the remarkable phenomena of the parting, rending or separation of the veil, by an unseen power was of itself astounding, and the mystery was deemed worthy of classification with the rending of the rocks, opening of the graves, rising of the dead, and darkening of the mid day. But we are persuaded that there is in each of these wonderful displays of divine power a lesson of spiritual instruction to the children of God, far, infinitely far, beyond what filled the hearts of the carnal Jews and Romans with such consternation and fear.

The temple was itself a divinely recognized emblem of the House or church of the living God; and all its parts were designed to represent some corresponding part, place or thing of or in the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. While the darkness, which prevailed from the sixth to the ninth hour, set forth the eclipse of the Sun of Righteousness, when Jesus bowed his head in death and entered the dark dominion of death and the grave, the opened graves and rising dead showed the bringing of life and immortality to light; the rending rocks, the breaking up of the legal dispensation; the abolition of death and destruction of him that had the power of death, so the rending of the veil signified the removal of the wall of partition which had concealed the most holy place from the view of the temple worshipers. In the epistle to the Hebrews, a description of the temple is given, and the signification of the several departments. At the ninth chapter we read, “Then

verily the first covenant [that of the old dispensation] had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us (Hebrews 9.1-11)." From what is here presented explanatory of the figurative design of the first and second veils of the temple, we learn that the veils were designed to separate, first the outer court worshipers from the holy place consecrated within the first veil for the priests of Israel to perform the *divine service, of the worldly sanctuary.* But within the second tabernacle, curtain or veil, was concealed from the gaze of the people the most holy place. None but

the high priest, and even he not without sacrificial blood, was allowed on pain of instant death to go within this veil; and that but once a year, in consecrated garments, with hallowed blood, bearing the names of the tribes for whom he officiated engraved on his breast-plate, and with golden bells between the pomegranates of his garments, to sound while he appeared before the mercyseat, and between the cherubims of glory, to signify that he lived to represent and intercede for them within the veil. Thus signifying that the way into this holy place was not as yet made manifest. The first veil or tabernacle must first be fulfilled in all its jots and tittles before the way into the glories of the gospel could be made manifest. But in Hebrews 10:8,9, we read, “He saith, Sacrifice and offerings and burnt offerings, and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which were offered by the law. Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

By the offering of this one sacrifice, which was accomplished by our Lord Jesus Christ at the time when the veil was rent, the obstacle which concealed the way of life and salvation from our view, was effectually removed, and the intervening veil being rent in twain from the top to the bottom, all the glory which it had for ages concealed was at once made manifest. The Ark of God appeared, the Mercyseat was clearly seen, the cherubims of glory, with all the consecrated furniture of the holiest of holies is no longer hidden from our faith. Now in the gospel, the veil of the covering which was over all flesh is taken away, except from those who still read Moses, or look to the law, or to their own legal works for acceptance with God; for to all such the veil still remains to this day untaken away. But all those who have had a view by faith of their crucified Lord, and have felt the sovereign efficacy of his atoning blood, and are clothed in his spotless

righteousness, can say with the spouse, “The keepers of the walls took away my veil from me,” and they all with open face, (having the veil removed) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. The impending veil removed, life and immortality is brought to light, the heavenly Jerusalem appears, the king of glory mounts his mediatorial throne, death is destroyed, hell is vanquished, Christ is victorious, the church of God is safe. Only through the death of Christ could these triumphs be achieved; it was therefore meet that the veil should be rent, and the way into the most holy disclosed, when Jesus put away the sins of his people by the sacrifice of himself. By himself Jesus enters the holy place not made with hands, even into heaven itself, and having obtained eternal redemption for all his members: they with his dead body arise; for he hath raised them up together, and made them to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. The faith that now beholds the sacrifice of Calvary, looks also within the veil; and reads the title clear to mansions in the skies.

This mystic veil was not rent from the bottom to the top; for the work did not begin on earth: it was not performed by us: but it was rent from the top to the bottom.

“Tis thy own work, Almighty God,
And wondrous in our eyes.

(To be continued)

Middletown, N.Y.
October 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 103 - 108

MARK 15:38

(Concluded)

“And the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom (Mark 15:38).”

In addition to what we have written on the figurative import of the veil of the temple, and its being rent in sunder, we will offer a few thoughts in regard to its application directly to the sacred person of our divine mediator. The most profound and glorious mystery presented in the whole volume of inspired wisdom and truth is that of God manifested in the flesh. And so vitally important and fundamental is this mystery that the apostle John has denounced as anti-christian every spirit that denieth that Christ is come in the flesh; while Paul, by the same spirit, affirms that “Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up unto glory.

The fleshly body of our Redeemer, which was made of a woman, and made under the law, is very appropriately called in scripture a veil, or tabernacle, within which dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The eternal Father, with all his attributes and perfections, was embodied in him, and in him so completely hidden that no man can come unto the Father but by him. While he is in the Father, the Father is also in him, and so entirely so that all who come unto God by him must come by and through the new and living way which God has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh. That flesh in which the Godhead dwelt, like the curtains of a tabernacle, concealed from human perception all the glory of the invisible God; and he was only seen in the fashion of a man and in the form of a servant. His flesh veiled the glory of his eternal Godhead from human scrutiny.

Neither Jews nor Gentiles could see any beauty in him to admire or to attract. To men he was as a root out of dry ground; and we hid, as it were, our face from him. Men could see his fleshly person as the Israelites could see the external curtains of the tabernacle in the wilderness, or the veil in the temple intervening between them and the ark, the mercy seat and the cherubims of glory. Men knew him, or supposed that they knew him, as the son of the carpenter; and regarded him as a despised Nazarene. But no man knew him in his true character save those to whom he was revealed by the Father. “Whom say men that I am?” They entertained a variety of opinions; but none of them the right. “But whom say ye that I am?” was demanded of the disciples, from whom the veil had been removed. Simon Peter declared the faith of the saints correctly, but he had not learned it of flesh and blood, but it was revealed to him by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the veil of the temple then pointed to the flesh of the Son of man, and that veil concealed the glory of the holiest place of all from the outer court worshipers, so the flesh of Christ conceals from the understanding of all natural men the light of immortality which he alone hath; for he is the only and blessed Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light, whom no man hath seen nor can see, whom no man can approach unto. Indeed it was not lawful for any to look within the veil while it remained, only the high priest, even so the law of God forbids a revelation of the unsearchable riches of Christ, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, to any of the sons of man until all the requisitions of the law are fulfilled, and the veil lawfully removed. In applying the rending of the veil to the redemption of the children of God, we shall see that as the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom so the letter and the spirituality of the law of God so far as it related to the family of God were separated. The righteousness of the law was fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit; while as a

law of commandments, having dominion over God's people it was taken out of the way, and as a separating wall or partition, it was no longer to obscure the way of life and salvation from the heirs of immortality. The trembling, guilt-stricken Israelite conscious of his uncleanness, with his hand upon his mouth, dared not to look within the veil. He knew full well the terror of the law. And when Moses, as the bearer of the holy law, came down the mountain from the presence of God, the carnal tribes could not steadfastly look on his face for it shined with insufferable glory. But when God removes the veil of the covering which was upon all flesh, it is by the presentation of a new and living way into the most holy place. Twas death to the carnal Israelite to look within the veil. But the way into the holiest of all is in the gospel found to be a new and *living way.* Not only is Christ as the way a living Christ; but those who by and through him approach unto God, instead of death are delivered from death, quickened and made alive, and come boldly to the throne of grace. They draw nigh unto God, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith by this new and living way which God has consecrated for them through the veil, that is his flesh. The rending of the flesh of the Son of God has opened the way of life and salvation for all who come unto God by him. Neither can any other than those for whom he was pierced be saved in this way; for it is *consecrated,* set apart, and appropriated to them alone who shall be the heirs of salvation. But it is a blessed thought that this consecration of the way to God by Christ includes all who feel their need of just such a Savior, and truly desire to be saved in and through this consecrated way; while all who look for salvation or access to God by any other way will find that in the end of their way are the ways of death.

This is a *new,* as well as a living and consecrated way. Not new to God; for known unto him are all his works from the beginning. But it is *new,* first, in distinction from the

ceremonial law; in which carnal men who were born in Abraham’s house, or bought with his money looked for remission of sins and acceptance with God by the deeds of the law, and through the flesh and blood of victims which were offered continually on Jewish altars. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope, by the which we draw nigh unto God. The carnal sons of Jacob who had never known the law only in its letter, had no idea of any other way to God, or to draw nigh unto God than through the blood of bulls, goats, heifers and the flesh of such offerings as they were presenting; therefore the way through the veil of his flesh, who was made flesh and dwelt among us was new, opening a way to God and into the holiest of all which the law could not present, and that was never made manifest while as yet the old tabernacle remained.

Secondly. In an experimental sense; for those who come unto God in this way never had any conception of this way until it was revealed to them. Hence when by the light of the quickening spirit of God they see the purity of the law which, as a dark and gloomy veil is upon them, they try to approach God by their prayers, tears, reformations, and resolutions, and failing to advance they sink in hopeless despair, give up all for lost; and verily think that even God cannot save them without tarnishing his justice; but when this living way is revealed to them, it is altogether new. A new light from the eternal throne of God reveals it; and a new life implanted in their hearts perceives it, and a new faith, as the fruit of that new life lays hold firmly upon it, they find themselves brought to God in this new, living, consecrated way. They are in Christ, and Christ is in God. They are one with Christ as Christ is one with the Father.

But, our sister may ask, how is this to be understood as being through his flesh. As we are identified with Christ by receiving of his fullness and grace for grace, identified with

him in that spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father and was given to us in the Son, so he has fully identified himself with us in taking on him, not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye the seed of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." The relationship is reciprocal; he takes on him the seed of Abraham, and imparts to them that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested. In giving to us this immortal life, he bestows on us the righteousness of God, without which we can not be saved; and in taking on him our flesh he takes on him our infirmities, carries our sorrows, bears our griefs, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. Our flesh is his flesh, and he is not ashamed to call us brethren; and within his flesh is life, and the life is the light of men; the life and immortality of the body, the church. Through this relationship the consecrated way is opened. The highway is here and the way, and it is the way of holiness; no lion shall be there nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon; for it is consecrated through his flesh for the wayfaring man; though fools shall not err therein. By this way all the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with joy upon their head, and sorrowing and sighing shall flee away. This immortality or life of God, which Christ is to the body, his Church, shall triumph over and finally swallow up the mortality of the seed of Abraham, and death shall be abolished, and these mortal members shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying which is written shall be brought to pass, that death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but, thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1864.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 108 - 112

MARK XVI, 15

"*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*." Mark xvi. 15.

True to the promise made to our correspondent at Berdette, in our last number, we will give a brief expression of our views upon the above text. We regret the want of room to give our mind more fully on this important subject, as we conceive it to be most awfully and wickedly perverted by the popular *theologians* of our day. It is by them perverted to means any thing and every thing but the truth. They quote it as a full and sufficient warrant for Theological Seminaries and Colleges; they profess to be governed by it in the formation of Mission Societies, and profess obedience to it in getting up and sustaining Sunday Schools; they inscribe these words as a motto upon the frontlet of their tracts, and other popular religious publications; and in short they would use it as a nose of dough, and make it to fit any face they choose.

And yet how very simple and plain the language is, when stripped of the sophistry and confusion into which the subject is thrown by the artful management of those who handle the Word of God deceitfully. This text like all others from the same source, is spoken with divine authority; and in the investigation of the subject, we will first notice the Commander; 2d, the persons addressed; 3rd, the command given, and lastly the inference we are warranted to draw from the subject.

First. Who is the commander? This is a very important question in the consideration of the subject in our estimation; for we hold that there is but ONE being in existence, either in heaven or on earth, who is clothed with sufficient authority to give such commands; hence should we – should an angel from heaven, or a Missionary Society on earth, say to any of

the sons of Adam, Go ye and preach the gospel, it would be the most daring presumption, and woe to the wretch who would obey our command. The commander in this case is none other than the Lord from heaven; and he prefaced this exhibition of his power and Godhead, by assuring his disciples that All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth, see Math. xxviii. 18; very evidently implying that less power would not be sufficient to authorise any one to issue this supreme command; but assuring them that he was in full possession of the power of both worlds, said unto them *Go ye therefore*. This divine commander is then the Almighty God – the great and glorious Head of his Church, and the Supreme Monarch of his kingdom. At his command, armies rise, his heralds fly, and his gospel is proclaimed.

"He looks and ten thousand of angels rejoice,
And myriads await for his word;
He speaks, and eternity, filled with his voice,
Re-echoes the praise of her Lord."

2nd. The people to whom this command was addressed. It has been very common with christian to suppose that this text was addressed to all those who in every age are divinely called to preach the gospel, and that a very similar commission, in many respects, is given by our Lord Jesus Christ to every one whom he has called to that work, we do not doubt; but these words were addressed exclusively to the Eleven Disciples whom it was his pleasure to name Apostles. We have already shown that many at this degenerate age, attempt to apply this commission to the various schemes and inventions of the day. We recollect seeing some twelves months ago, if our recollection serves correctly, an advertisement in the Bap. Repository of New York, calling for *Six Hundred* persons to distribute Tracts in that city, in obedience to the command "*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel!*" We are persuaded that every candid child

of God is fully prepared to say with us, that this commission belongs to none but such as are specially called and chosen of God to that work.

If our space would serve, we should here look a little into the manner of the calling and the qualifications of the Eleven, and of all others whom the God of heaven has called to preach his everlasting gospel. They were not called or enticed by the glittering charm of gold, for they held that, The love of money was the root of all evil; (what a strange creed for this day!) nor were they qualified by Colleges or Theological *Seminaries*, neither were they employed or sustained by Mission Societies. But they were men of God, born of his spirit, and generally illiterate as God's Ministers are to this day. Only think what sort of an agent for the modern purposes Peter would make, if he were now on earth, to tell Simon, "Thy money perish with thee. Thou hast thought the gifts of the Holy Ghost might be bought with money," &c. Would not our black-coated woolgatherers rather say, give us the money and then perish for aught we care? Paul too would make an odd figure at that business, unless he would quit working with his own hand to administer to his necessities, and to those that were with him.

And can our readers believe that God who changes not, now delights in a different class of ministers, of opposite sentiments, greedy for filthy *lucre?* Impossible. We come thirdly to notice the command, *Go ye* – not *send others*, this would certainly be an awful perversion of the word of God. Who does not know the sense of language better than to ignorantly fall into so fatal a blunder? *Go ye*, i.e., yourselves, those to whom our Lord addressed the command, *into all the world and preach the gospel unto every creature*. The extent of the divine command is not to be restricted for want of funds, for the Lord told his disciples that he would go with them; so there was no fear, they knew that he who rained

down Manna into the camp of ancient *Israel* – who fed Elijah by the ravens – who blessed the loaves and fishes, could, and would if it should be necessary, call up the fish of the sea with money in their mouths to answer all necessary purposes. No parish bounds were set – their field of labor was *all the world;* these Eleven, in the very sense of this text, went every where preaching the word. See 20th verse.

The Executive Committee of the Mission Societies do attempt to *ape* or mimick the work of the Lord, by their *enchantments*, as did the magicians their brethren of old – the work of Moses and Aaron. They call men, put them through the Theological Factory, give them what they presumptiously call a commission, appoint to them the field of their labor, direct them when, where and what to preach, and then pay them by the day, month or year their hire. But these being the hirelings of the mission societies are not the servants of Christ, for no man can serve two masters.

But this command not only designates the men, and points out to them the field of their labour, but it directs them what to do – *preach the gospel*. There is no authority here given to play oft Seminary airs, read notes, or beg money – for after all these things do the gentiles seek – but preach the gospel. The term *gospel* means now precisely what it always did, and when the Apostle in obedience to this very command preached it – eternal, personal and unconditional election: See Ephesians i. 3; 2nd Thess. ii. 13; 2nd Tim. i. 9. They preached Predestination in the most absolute sense of the term: See Eph. i. 5,11; Rom. viii. 28,30; Acts ii. 23, and iv. 27,28. They preached the atonement of Christ specially and definitely for the elect, and for them exclusively: Rom. iv. 25; Eph. v. 25; Titus ii. 14; 1 Peter i. 19,21; Heb. x. 14. In short they taught the disciples to observe all things *whatsoever Christ had commanded*, and to let any and every man or angel be accursed who should preach any other gospel.

In conclusion we were to note some few plain inferences. First, As all the power in heaven and in earth was indispensably involved in qualifying the great Redeemer for the work of calling, qualifying, sending forth and sustaining the ministers of the gospel; there are, and can be none of his ministers on earth at this day, but what are so called, qualified, sustained, &c.; and consequently all such as do arrogantly assume this work, and pretend to call, qualify or send forth ministers, or to do any part of this work, are anti-Christ. Second, Inasmuch as Christ has all power, he can, and does call into the ministry whomsoever he pleaseth, independently of all the schemes of men. If therefore he has occasion for learned men, the learned are at his control; and the only reason why the church has not a more plentiful supply of faithful and talented ministers, is not occasioned by bankruptcy on his part, but is simply because he has not seen fit at present to call them to the work. Again, as the work is wholly his own, he is as able to raise up the natives of Burmah, Hindosian, or the Indians of our woods, as any of those whom human wisdom might suggest.

2nd. As this commission was addressed to none but such as were designated by our Lord, and can apply to none others without manifest violation of its proper sense or meaning; it is insulting to the divine Majesty, for us to so far abuse its meaning as to apply it to the peddling of Tracts, and to the promulgation of error, or the building up of the various inventions of men or devils – whether they be called *benevolent* or otherwise.

3rd. As the command plainly expresses what those unto whom a divine application of it is made, are to do, there can be no place found in the sense of this, or any other Bible warrant, for building or sustaining of Theological Institutions for the purpose of teaching such as are so called what their Lord and Master would have them do. As their calling is of

God – and the King's business always requires haste – it would amount to rebellion, if not treason, for any one of his called ministers to spend anytime to learn in any humanly contrived school, how or what to preach in his name. We are unavoidably driven to the conclusion, that no Minister of Jesus Christ ever has, or will be detained any longer in such a place than he could be in the belly of hell; the severe but irresistible conclusion therefore is, that all the pupils of these Gamaliels of our day, are the prophets of Baal, and are fed at the table of that pious old lady called Jezebel, whose children our God has promised to kill with death, Rev. ii. 23.

Lastly, we would say to our Brother in Berdette, and to all our readers, "Beware of false prophets, which come unto you in Sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves." "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree forth good fruit." Therefore, brethren, try the spirits, whether they are of God, or whether they are not rather of men; and always remember that God in his holy word has set this indelible mark on all the watchmen of Anti-Christ: "They are all greedy dogs that can never have enough."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
NEW VERNON, Wednesday JULY 22

Signs of the Times
Volume 3, No. 15
July 29, 1835

MARK XVI. 17, 18.

Brother Beebe: Will you give your views on the last words which our Savior spake before his ascension, namely: "And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

F. BRENDELL.
Hamilton Co., Iowa, March 10, 1859.

Reply: In the early ministry of the apostles of the Lamb, and of the primitive disciples of our risen Lord, all these signs did literally follow them that believed, for it is added in the closing verse of the same chapter, "And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen." Many instances are recorded of miracles performed by them in the name of the Lord Jesus, such as healing the sick, casting out devils; and we have an instance of the deadly viper which lit on Paul's hand, and which he shook off into the fire, to the utter astonishment of the heathen with whom his lot was providentially cast, and all these signs were performed in confirmation of the word of the Lord. To prove by ocular demonstration the reality of the exaltation of the Son of God, and his divine omnipotence, external evidence was thus given, and such as confounded and stopped the mouths of infidel philosophers, but having thus by the most supernatural testimonies established the certainty of the resurrection and exaltation of our Divine Redeemer, ocular demonstrations were to cease, and the saints in all subsequent ages were to live by faith upon the Son of God, and not to walk by sight. If these ocular demonstrations were

to be continued, the natural judgments of men might be convinced without any radical change of heart, as many were in those days of miracles. But our knowledge of God, of spiritual and divine things, is not by informing or convincing our natural or carnal minds through the natural senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, &c., but by special revelation of the Spirit to the faith of the children of God. The carnal Jews, whose religion was the service of a worldly sanctuary, and whose ordinances were carnal, relied on signs, desired signs, required signs, and the learned Greeks who sought after wisdom, were in their carnal state, incapable of appreciating any other evidence, for except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit. But the children of God shall all be taught by the Lord. The Spirit, the Holy Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, is the teacher of the saints. He, said Jesus, shall take of the things of mine, and shall shew them unto you. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them even unto the greatest, saith the Lord.

Miraculous displays of the divine power are not now made to the natural understanding of natural men, as in the apostles' day; but we do not hold that the day of miracles is passed. The work of salvation by grace is as miraculous now as it ever was. The work is superhuman, supernatural, and in it the naked arm of God is as visible to the faith of God's children at one time as another. The ministry of the gospel, in a spiritual sense, is as healing to the sick, and quickening to the dead now, as formerly. Not that preaching in itself ever quickened or healed any one, but these signs follow in all those whom God has quickened by his Spirit. It is the power and wisdom of God. In his name devils are now displaced, cast out, and believers in Christ are secured from the rage of wicked men and devils. The old serpent, and all his brood of

vipers, are in this day, in a spiritual sense, trodden upon by the saints, and all their venom is rendered harmless to God’s people by and through the matchless name of our ascended Lord.

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1859.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 224 - 226

MATTHEW 2:2; LUKE 1:31-33; JOHN 1:49

Brother Beebe: - Although I do not wish to be troublesome, still I have a desire to have your views on the following Scriptures: "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" (Matthew 2:2) In Luke 1:31-33, it is said: "And shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Again, John 1:49, "Nathaniel answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." Now my particular inquiry is, In what sense is he the King of the Jews, setting up the throne of David, and reigning over the house of Jacob, as the King of Israel?

Your unworthy brother,
J. E. Settle.
New Hope, KY., March 14, 1862.

REPLY: The passages presented, especially Luke 1:3 1, identifies our Lord Jesus Christ as the illustrious personage of whom the other passages testify, and of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, and of whom God had spoken by the prophet Micah, verse 2, saying, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

The Jews, the house of Jacob and Israel, all mean the same thing. Literally these names were applied to the twelve patriarchs and their descendants according to the flesh, as the house or family of Jacob, which was also called by his

name Israel, including the whole commonwealth, as redeemed from the house of bondage, and brought out of Egypt by the high hand and outstretched arm of God, led through the wilderness, and into the promised land, where subsequently God raised up David and gave him to be a king over them. This same people were called Jews, which name they derived from Judah, the patriarch of that tribe to which David their king belonged, and after the division of the house of Jacob, by the secession of ten tribes, which were afterwards called Israel, the two tribes which still adhered to the government of the house, or descendants of David, were called Jews, in distinction from the revolted tribes which had organized a separate and distinct government.

Israel under the old dispensation was the type of the church and kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, in its gospel organization. But in the gospel church, ‘lie is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is there circumcision, which is outward in the flesh.” (Rem. 2:28) All that constituted a man a Jew, nationally, was outward. If born in Abraham’s house, or bought with his money, and circumcised with the circumcision made with hands, as an outward rite, in the flesh, such an one was a Jew outwardly, but no fleshly birth, or outward rites, can constitute a person an anti-typical Jew, or one inwardly, as the church of Christ is a kingdom which is not of this world, and in which no man is known after the flesh. For “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.” “Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Those, therefore, who are born again are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; and, “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;” they are made manifest as a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a

peculiar people. These are the seed that shall serve him, and be accounted to our Lord Jesus Christ for a generation, and these alone constitute the true, spiritual, or anti-typical Israel of our God. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” (Gal. 3:29) When John the Baptist saw many of the Jews, who were only Jews outwardly, who had not been born of the Spirit, and therefore could not show fruits meet for repentance, come to his baptism, he gave them to understand that although they were undoubtedly Jews outwardly, they could not be received into communion with those who were Jews inwardly, as subjects of the spiritual kingdom, on any such claims. He said unto them, “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance; and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” (Matt. 3:7-9) “But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.” (Rom. 2:29)

Having briefly shown the distinction between the outward Jews, who are Jews outwardly in the flesh, and those who are Jews inwardly and spiritually, we proceed to show that Christ was born King of the Jews, according to the latter classification. Thus one of the Gentile churches, in Asia, is recognized as Jews in this inward and spiritual sense, while those who were of the synagogue of Satan, who said they were Jews, but were not, (that is, in this inward and spiritual sense) but did lie, were disowned and denounced as deceivers, intruders and liars. (Rev. 3:9) Paul very clearly elucidates in what sense Christ is King of the Jews, and in what sense the subjects of Christ’s government are Jews, in his arguments to the Galatians. Hear him, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,” etc. “That the

blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth. or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." (Gal. 3:13-16) Also verses 6-9: "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." As David, therefore, was king over the carnal Israelites, so Jesus Christ, who is the anti-type of David, is King of all the Israel of God, who are Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile, for he has washed them from all pollution in his own atoning blood, and clothed them with the garments of his salvation, and covered them with the robe of his righteousness. David was in many respects the most eminent type of Christ, especially of him in his kingly office, and as the Son of David, in lineal descent, he bears his name, and from his loins, according to the flesh, was raised up to sit upon his throne. Isaiah recorded his advent in prophecy, as a child born, a Son given, "The government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever." (Isa. 9:6,7) The sublime language used in Psalms 89, can only be understood in its application to Christ, although the name of David as the type is used: "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto

David my servant, thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations." Again, "Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One, and saidest, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: with whom my hand shall be established; mine arm also shall strengthen him. The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him; and in my name shall his horn be exalted. I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. My mercy will I keep for him forevermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure forever, and his throne as the days of heaven." "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me." On the day of Pentecost, Peter, in preaching to the people, spake freely of the patriarch David, and proved conclusively that the declarations made to David were prophetic, and were not fulfilled in David as a man, personally, nor in his natural posterity, but that they were spoken of and fulfilled in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne; he, seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." According, therefore, to all the prophecies going before, God has set his King upon his holy hill Zion, and has said unto him, Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. And unto his Son he saith, "Thy

throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom: thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:8,9)

We have briefly considered the spiritual kingdom and government of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the King of the Jews, showing that his subjects are Jews spiritually, and of the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, discarding the flesh, and having no confidence in it. We have also pointed out some reasons why the throne of the spiritual kingdom is called the throne of David, namely: Because it was typified by the throne of David, and the Mediatorial throne of the Son of God is to the spiritual Israel the only legitimate place and center of power to the church of God, as the throne of David in the type, was the center of all legislative, judicial and administrative power for the government of the carnal Israelites. As no other department of the commonwealth of Israel had any right to resist, supersede, amend or alter any of the orders of the throne of David, so the power of the Wonderful, Counselor, who sits upon the throne of David in this spiritual or gospel sense, alone has power to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth, even forever.

We have also shown that as God had promised and sworn with an oath to David, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne, so in the resurrection of Christ, his inauguration, coronation as King of Zion, setting as Priest upon his throne, to rule and bear the glory, we have the verification of the promise and oath. Thus showing in what sense he is King of the Jews, who the Jews are, over whom he reigns; how he sits upon the throne of David, and how his sceptre is swayed over the

house of Jacob, and his reign of righteousness as the King of Israel.

We may have failed to comprehend the design of our brother’s inquiries, and consequently to satisfy his mind, but what we have written we will submit to his consideration, and to the consideration of all our readers, praying that what we have written as our views may be carefully and prayerfully tested by the standard of truth, and only indorsed or accredited so far as they shall be found sustained by the holy Scriptures.

Middletown, N.Y.,
April 1, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 165 - 170

MATTHEW 5:16

"Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16)

This exhortation was addressed to the disciples by our Lord Jesus Christ in the course of his discourse upon the mount. Retiring from the multitude that had gathered round him, Jesus withdrew to a mountain with the little group of his disciples, and sat down and instructed them. First in regard to the blessings of God which rest upon all such as possesses the characteristics of true discipleship, which are these: poor in spirit, mourners, meek, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, yet a proscribed, persecuted, suffering and reviled people for Jesus' sake. That the development of these characteristics is to distinguish the children of God as the blessed of the Lord throughout all time, there can be no doubt; so that in the absence of these there are no marks by which we are at liberty to recognize them from the unregenerate mass of mankind. The children of God are not blessed for possessing these discriminating qualities, for that would imply that they were chosen on account of some personal excellency in themselves, which God has said is not the case; but the possession of them is the evidence of their being blessed, the effect and consequence of their having been previously blessed. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph 1:3-4) Thus we see that all spiritual blessings were prior to our personal holiness and exemption from blame, and our holiness and deliverance from guilt result from and are in accordance with his blessing upon and choice of us before

the foundation of the world; and this choice and provision of grace and mercy had in view, as its ultimate object, and did secure to God's chosen people holiness and deliverance, from blame. For the encouragement of this distinguished and blessed people, Christ has, in this chapter, given exceeding great and previous promises for their faith to live upon, vis.: 1st, the kingdom of heaven is theirs; 2d, they shall be comforted; 3d, they shall inherit the earth; 4th, they shall be filled with righteousness; 5th, they shall obtain mercy; 6th, they shall see God; 7th, they shall be called the children of God; 8th, theirs is the kingdom of heaven; 9th, great is their reward in heaven. What a glorious catalogue of shalls are strung together like a chain of gold to comfort, adorn and sustain the people of God.

"Each of them powerful as that soul
That bid the new made world go round,
And stronger than the solid pole
On which the wheels of nature roll.
The voice that rolls the stars along
Speaks all the promises.

Such a people, this distinguished in the eternal choice of God, thus chosen of God unto holiness and ordained to eternal life, Jesus separated from the multitude, and sat down upon the mountain to teach as never man taught; and unto this people the exhortation placed at the head of this article is addressed. To no other people under heaven can this admonition apply. No other people are in possession of this light, nor can any other people let it shine, or aid in the diffusion of it. To this distinguished people Jesus said, Ye are the light of the world: a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Then follows the word of command: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good

works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." That the disciples to whom these words were immediately addressed were designed in a special manner to diffuse the light of divine truth, as ministers of the gospel, we shall not dispute; but we must at the same time contend that the gospel church, embracing all the subjects of his kingdom, is included with them, as the city set upon a hill; and each member of the gospel church is addressed, and in these words commanded to let his light so shine. The testimony which the sons of God are called to bear, is something more than can be borne by a mere articulation of sounds, and in the spirit of the admonition before us, it is to be borne by a display of works, at the development of which God is to be glorified, and all that are in the house of God are to be illuminated.

It is of vital importance that we should understand by what description of works God is to be glorified; for we live in a day in which there is great confusion and error upon this subject. For this very reason we have called the attention of our Old School Baptist readers to the consideration of this important subject, and we wish to be very particular in defining the nature and description of the works by which our testimony of Jesus is to be uttered. In order that we may be the more distinctly understood, we will first state some kinds of work by which a correct, true and faithful testimony cannot be borne, and consequently, by which the declarative glory of God cannot be advanced by us. And first, the works of the flesh have nothing to do with the diffusion of the light of Zion. By the works of the flesh, we understand all such works as the children of men, in an unregenerate state are capable of performing. All our powers, whether physical or mental, are by nature depraved; so that all the emanations from our fleshly powers are earthly, sensual and devilish. The thoughts and devices of the unrenewed heart are evil, and that continually. The carnal, or fleshly mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can

be. Christ has informed us that it is as impossible for man in his unregenerate state to perform that which is acceptable to God, as it is for a corrupt fountain to send forth pure water. The fountain must first be made pure, and then, but not until then, will the streams be pure. The tree must be first made good, and then its fruit will be good. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest; which are these: (disguise, modify, or shape them as you may, still they are there) "adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like." (Gal. 5:19-24) Consequently the works of the flesh are not the works by which the children of the kingdom of Christ are to glorify God. The declarative glory of God cannot result from our works, as the apostle clearly testifies to Titus chapter 3, verses 4 and 5: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior towards men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done," etc. All the works which we as creatures can do, whether good or bad, can never make the kindness or love of God appear, or in any wise develop the glory of our Father which is in heaven: therefore, such works as can be planned by our mental, and executed by our physical powers, are not the works intended in our text.

Second, the works of the law are not intended: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." (Gal. 3:10) And the works required in the text are from such as are under the blessing, and not under the curse. Works which are wrought by us, however unexceptionable, if wrought in obedience to the Sinai covenant can never show forth our redemption from the law, or our translation into the kingdom of Jesus Christ. So very far are we from glorifying our Father in heaven, when we attempt to liquidate the demands of the Sinai law, and by obedience to its precepts render ourselves acceptable unto God, we insult the divine Majesty, and count

the blood of the covenant wherewith Christ was sanctified, (or set apart as the law fulfilled) an unholy thing. A thing of itself insufficient for the perfect accomplishment of the complete salvation of his people. None who have faith in the perfect work of Christ will ever think it necessary for them to do his work over again, or to offer any amendment upon what Christ has done; but rather rest their whole soul on that finished salvation which Christ has effected by his perfect obedience to the requisitions of the law, and his suffering of the penalty due for the transgressions of his people.

If then, as we have proved by the testimony of the scriptures, the works required of the children of God, whereby they shall show forth the praise of him that has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, are not those which are of the flesh, nor even our works of obedience to the holy law of God, by what works, our readers may inquire, shall let our light so shine before men that they may glorify our Father which is in heaven?

The light which the saints are to let shine is that which God lighted up in our souls, when he communicated to us the light of spiritual life; of vital union to Jesus, as our Head by which we are enabled to see the kingdom of God. (John 3:3) And the only works by which that light can be made manifest to all that are in the house, are those works which God has wrought in us (Isa.26:12). "For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil.2: 13) The works intended in our subject are those wherein we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end thereof is everlasting life. They are those whereof we are born of God. They are defined by Paul as the fruits of the Spirit, viz: Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, etc. (Gal. 3:22 & 23) As also defined and enjoined by Peter, thus, "Giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge,

temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his own sins." (2 Peter 1:5-9) Those, therefore, who obey the injunction of Jesus, in our text, are those in whom these things, mentioned by Peter, abound, and by the abounding of the things they let their light shine; for they, in whom these things do not abound are blind, cannot see afar off and have forgotten that they were purged from their old sins; while they who do those things, viz: the things which are to be added to their faith; do walk in the light - do let their light shine, and are not barren nor unfruitful, are not blind, they can see afar off, and do remember that they have been purged from their old sins.

No man can add to his faith, virtue, until he is in possession of faith; and faith is the fruit of the Spirit, and the gift of God, and without it we cannot please God. No man can let his light shine, who has no light to shine. The breaking of the pitchers of Gideon's three hundred men could have produced no light, if the lamps had not been in the pitchers. We were sometimes darkness, but God has delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son; has given us an inheritance among the saints in light; constituted us children of the light; commanded us to walk in the light, and to let our light shine. "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. 4:6)

Christians, Old School Baptists, readers of the "Signs of the Times", has the Sun of Righteousness arisen upon you with

healing in his wings? Do you know him as the Fountain and Fulness of light, life and blessedness? How is it with you at this time? Are you reflecting that light, by walking in the light as the children of the day? Are you adding to your faith, virtue, and to virtue all those excellencies made manifest by the refulgent radiance of that light? Or have you forgotten that you have been purged from your old sins? If this is your situation, may not the apostolic admonition be applicable in your case? "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." (Eph 5:14-15) Would you, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, let your light shine, remembering that this can only be done by walking worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called of God. We are not to sleep, as do others; there are foes for us to face, conflicts to be endured, enemies to be encountered, errors to be exposed, truth to be set forth, sheep and lambs to be fed, brethren to be exhorted, heresy to be resisted, persecution to be suffered, a cross to be borne, a warfare to be engaged in, a good fight to be fought, a course to be finished, and a crown to be received and worn in heaven. Each other's burdens are to be borne, and we are to watch over each other, detect sin and reprove it, both in ourselves and in others; a world to be renounced and its vanities to be laid aside. Besides all this, there are mourning Christians to be looked up and comforted, strayed sheep and lambs to be restored; lions, wolves, dragons and devils to be subdued; and God has given us a banner to be displayed because of the truth. Sons of Zion, purchase of the Redeemer's blood, can you discover nothing in all these considerations which requires you to "Let your light shine?"

But do we hear one say, "My home is in the Lord, I do not expect to be saved by my works!" If your hope is good for any thing, it must be in the Lord; and if you look to works for salvation you will be awfully disappointed. But have you

indeed a hope in God, and is it true that you rely on him and him alone for salvation? How will you make this known without faith and obedience? If your faith is of God, it will manifest itself by obedience. The very confidence which the Christian has in God as a whole Savior, swells his expanding hearth with love and gratitude, and awakens every heaven-born sensibility of his soul with ardent desires to glorify him in his body and spirit which are Christ's.

Few, feeble, weak and persecuted as we may seem to be in this day of rebuke and blasphemy, we ask for no accession to our ranks, but such as love our Lord Jesus Christ, and are willing to suffer the loss of all things for his sake. A very orthodox theory of faith and loud professions of attachment to the doctrine which sustains and comforts our souls are not enough. That faith only is genuine which works by love and purifies the heart. It is true, the old order of Baptists have been in some cases imposed on by persons professing our faith, who have proved (but too painfully to us) spots in our feasts of charity; men who cannot let their light shine because they have none; all they deem necessary is to sign with their hand our creed, and surname themselves Israel, and then make the livery of the Old School serve them as a cloak for their ungodly corruption of life and deportment.

Should we attempt a delineation of the characters to whom we allude, we might be thought quite too personal; we will leave our brethren and our churches to look around them, letting their own light shine at the same time, and drag into the light those who have crept in among them unawares. Those who can find hours to spend in the merry circle of the graceless and profane, and can find some trivial excuse for absenting themselves from the house of prayer, those who can find the time and the means to fill a whole community of Christians with tumult, bickerings, jealousies, contentions and disorder, but have no disposition to weep with those who

weep, and mourn with those who mourn; though they may boast of volumes of head-religion imported from neighboring countries, can give but poor evidence of a light lamp within their earthen pitcher. There may be preachers who can boast of preaching in the name of Jesus, and of casting out devils, and working miracles, and in their own estimation, giants among dwarfs, yet in the diffusion of the light they shall be detected, and should be put away. Those who are careless concerning what figure they make in the world, can join with the jovial and eat and drink with the drunken, cannot be at the same time shunning the appearance of evil, or letting the light of life, derived from Jesus, shine before men, that they may see their good works and glorify God.

Many of the dear saints of God may feel convicted of having been too remiss in regard to a circumspect walk and conversation. Alas! how much we all have to lament of our shortcoming; but the apparent severity of our remarks in this article will not break their bones, they will not be offended, but they will acknowledge with the writer,

"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love."

The stand which we as Old School Baptist have taken, the sacrifices we have been called to make for the sake of purity in faith and practice, and above all, our love of holiness, our allegiance to Jesus as our King, our sense of the immaculate purity of his precious cause, will not allow us to walk in fellowship with those, under any name whatever, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. On the one hand, we should withhold our countenance from heretics, and on the other, from all who hold the truth in unrighteousness; and so from every brother that walketh disorderly withdraw ourselves.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Mt. Vernon, NY
September 15, 1843

Republished: The Remnant
Volume 3, No. 6 - November - December, 1989

MATTHEW 5:25,26

(Reply to inquiry of M. R. Langford.)

"Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing (Matthew 5:25-26)."

It should be remembered that what is commonly called Christ's sermon on the mount, in which this passage occurs, was addressed exclusively to his disciples. At the commencement of this chapter we are told that "Seeing the multitudes," which thronged around him, "he went up into a mountain, and when he was set, his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them," etc. This discourse, occupying the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, is filled with instructions to them, as disciples, and such instructions as were not by him designed for any but disciples, or he would not have purposely avoided the multitudes, and sought seclusion for the purpose of administering them. After giving them many reliable evidences of their blessed state, and many precious assurances that they should inherit the kingdom of heaven, that they should be comforted, should inherit the earth, be filled with righteousness, should obtain mercy, see God, and be called the children of God, he taught them in regard to the spirituality of the laws of his kingdom as contrasted with the letter of the law as taught by the Scribes, and enjoined upon the disciples of Moses under the former dispensation. The traditional instructions given to the carnal Israelites, with which they had been familiar, had failed to impress them with a proper knowledge and appreciation of the righteousness of

the law of God, as fulfilled in the spiritual subjects of the grace of God; for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin to condemn sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. It had been said of them in old times, in expounding the law to the carnal Israelites, “Thou shalt not kill.” But the instructions given by Christ to his disciples not only forbids them to kill, but forbids that they should be angry. “Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” As said the prophet Samuel to Saul, “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.” As the gifts or offerings required of the children of Israel under the ceremonial law were typical of the gifts which are required to be employed in the church of Christ for the general edification of the whole body, we learn by this admonition that the offering or exercises of our gifts in the church cannot be acceptable to God, nor edifying to the church if we neglect the order of the house of God which requires us to “Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” As Christ loved the church and gave himself for it, so we are required to love one another, and if need be, to lay down our life one for another. In the absence of this pure and peaceable spirit and disposition, our gifts, which we offer for the edification of the saints, and in the worship of God, are like the lame, the blind, or the sick of the flocks which were offered under the law. “If thou bring thy gift to the altar.” Thy gift may be the preaching of the word, prayer, exhortation, singing, or some other gift. Before it can be offered with acceptance upon the altar of the Lord, obedience to the command of Christ must be rendered. If we are angry with a brother without a cause we cherish the spirit of murder, and are in danger of the judgment of the church,

or the apostles, which says, “We know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” Should the church pronounce this judgment on us, it will exclude us from their fellowship. Or, if one brother shall say to another, Raca (vain fellow, or “thou fool”), he shall be in danger of the council, or of the judgment of the church, or of *hell-fire,* in the sense in which these words are used by the apostle James (see James 3:6) defiling the whole body, setting on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.

Seeing then the importance of these instructions, and what dreadful consequences result from disobedience, or neglect, of the command of our Lord in this case, “Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him.” *Thine adversary,* we understand to be the brother whom we remember has aught against us. While we are in the way with him is while the matter is between the offender and the offended brothers, and has spread no further. How much easier it is, generally, to settle a difficulty when it first occurs than after allowing our feelings to become fretted; it is like a sore that becomes worse from long neglect. In all personal grievances between brethren, there is a time when it is between them, and when by proper concession and lenity an agreement may be effected, and the harmony and peace of the church preserved. There is no time to be lost; before you offer your gift, before you attend to anything else, however important, go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Lest at any time the adversary, the offended brother, deliver thee to the judge. The church is invested with power to judge and decide all matters of difficulty between her members, according to the laws of Christ, and her judgment, when rendered according to the word and spirit of the gospel, is final, and from it there is no appeal. When the offended brother has laid the matter before a gospel church, it is out of his hands, he cannot recall it, it is

in the hands of the judge, and cannot now be settled by the two with whom it originated.

And the judge deliver thee to the officer. This is figurative language, as judges always first adjudicate the case, and pass the sentence of the law upon the convicted before he delivers him to the officer to execute the sentence. So the church as the judge in this case having given her decisive judgment against the offender delivers him over to the discipline of the church, and he is cast into prison. A prisoner is one whose liberties are taken from him, and who is shut up and cannot walk at large. And is it not so with one who has enjoyed the liberty of the sons of God to mingle in sweet fellowship with the saints, to offer his gifts on the Lord's holy altar, to preach, exhort, sing and pray in the fellowship of all his brethren? Shut out from communion and fellowship, he is like the Israelite who was put out from the congregation of the Lord for his transgression or uncleanness until he should be perfectly cleansed, and be approved by the priest, and then come with the offering required in his case by the law. Though a child of God might hold at his command all the treasures, society and vanities of the world, he is a prisoner and must deeply feel that he is so in very deed if he is shut out of the liberty of the church. "Verily, I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." As the convicted Hebrew could not be released from his embarrassment, and restored to the congregation of the Lord until the priest had pronounced him clean, and then with his offering he was permitted to return, so until God shall give the excluded person a sufficient amount of repentance and humility to satisfy the whole church, and fully restore him to their fellowship, he cannot come out of his prison, or again enjoy the liberty of the saints. But when Ephriam is filled with his own ways, and is sufficiently humbled under the mighty hand of God to bemoan his condition, and smite upon his thigh, and come

humbly back to the church with his offering of confession, and give full evidence that his heart is broken, and his spirit is contrite before the Lord, then the uttermost farthing is paid, and nothing more is or can be required, and there is more joy in heaven (the church) over this repentant sinner than over all those who have not transgressed.

Middletown, N.Y.
October 15, 1866.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 6
Pages 401 - 404

MATTHEW VI. 7.

“But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”

Prayer is a solemn but blessed privilege to the saints of God. It is solemn, when we duly consider the infinite disparity between the trembling petitioner, and the supreme God before whom he bows down to worship. No flesh can stand in his presence, for all flesh is corrupted, and all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and as God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, we cannot approach him without being consumed, only as we are permitted to draw nigh by that new and living way which he has consecrated through the flesh of him who was made flesh and dwelt among us, and from whose fullness, as the only begotten of the Father, we, who have passed from death unto life, have received, and grace for grace. It is a blessed privilege, because none can pray unto God acceptably unless they are quickened by the Spirit of the Lord, for God is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth; and as all spiritual blessings were given to the children of God, according as they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, the indispensable qualification to pray acceptably to God is a spiritual blessing. And in the enjoyment of this privilege, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities, and maketh intercession for us. Those who are born of God are born of the Spirit, and become spiritual worshipers; not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit. This includes all who are of the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, or in any of the powers of the flesh, physical or mental; all their confidence is in him by whom,

and through whom alone, they have access by the Spirit unto God.

As the flesh profiteth nothing, and no flesh can approach unto God, prayer and all other worship of the true God being purely spiritual, they are sadly mistaken who think they are to be heard for their much speaking, or for any other fleshly exercises of their organs of speech, or the passions of their carnal nature.

"The heathen think they shall be heard for their much speaking." The term heathen applies not alone to pagans, or the barbarous tribes of mankind, but to all who are strangers to God, ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, whether they be Jews, Papists or Protestants. All who are not born of God and taught by the Spirit, are in heathen darkness, so far as the light of the knowledge of the glory of God is concerned, and they invariably think there is some virtue in their uttering solemn sounds from their unhallowed tongues. The carnal Jews relied on their long prayers, and frequent repetitions of them, and in that error they disfigured their faces, prayed often, loud and long, in corners of the streets and at the market places.

Papists and Protestants teach their unregenerated children to use vain repetitions of this kind; to repeat what is called the Lord's Prayer. A prayer which Christ taught his disciples to use, and which can be used acceptably only by the children of God, who can in spirit and in truth say, "Our Father which art in heaven." None can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, and none can come unto the Father but by him. Written and printed forms of prayer are prepared for vain repetition, to be read by the parsons and vainly repeated by their deluded hearers, after the same manner that masses are said, beads counted by Papists, or senseless mutterings

are uttered by pagans who bow down to stocks or stones, and by all of them under the delusive hope that there is some merit or virtue in their performance, to please the gods before whom they bow. Without faith it is impossible to please God. Yet men who are dead in sin, and consequently destitute of the faith of the Son of God, are taught to rely upon their vain repetition of prayers and invocations to commend them to the divine favor. This is what the Scriptures pronounce impossible.

But the saints themselves are liable to err sometimes on this subject, or the admonition of our text would be inapplicable to them. Paul says, We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss; and he further testifies that we know not how to pray as we ought; we are dependent on the Spirit to make intercession for us in language which our tongues can neither utter nor repeat. If, then, the christian cannot pray acceptably to God only as the spirit of grace and of supplication is given to help his infirmities, how preposterous to contend that unregenerated men, totally destitute of spiritual life, and totally ignorant of the Spirit and of the things of the Spirit, which things are foolishness unto them, can worship God in spirit and in truth. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and to believe in God is a work of faith, and consequently they who have no faith cannot pray only in hypocritical forms and vain repetitions.

Christians should avoid ostentatious display in prayer, or flowery language, fluent speech or affections, to be admired of men. But as the Spirit indites the desires, so let the child of grace breathe them forth in the simplicity of the heart, knowing that the God to whom we pray knows all our necessities, and needs not to be informed of anything by us. And the

"Painted hypocrites are known,
Through the disguise they wear."

Middletown, N. Y.
May 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 455 - 457

MATTHEW 7:6

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed, Christ's sermon on the mount, in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit, and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemer in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, sanctified or set apart for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind, were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted

by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed. All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, he provided that the food necessary for man's subsistence should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth earthy, his subsistence must, to be adapted to the support of his earthly nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature, as a fallen, sinful, earthy man. So in the figure we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things; as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the earth, and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else. Those who are thus born of God are a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people," etc., chosen, consecrated and set apart, "sanctified by God the Father," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," etc., cleansed and

washed, purged and justified, they shall be called the holy people, and as a holy, consecrated people they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven. Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people; a people which God has cleansed, and which we are forbidden to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of an animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb; he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep would starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs that cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation 22:15, they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, nor minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and

hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides, it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, the gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. The ministers of Christ have nothing but the gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost, while all others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition is, that we are forbidden to attempt to christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the word, and applying to them the ordinances of the gospel as a means of salvation, by catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, etc., as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of

our text: “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine.” It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual privileges, their christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellency cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels. Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly; infidels, Arminians, will-worshipers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace. The psalmist said, “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.” They who fear the Lord can understand the language, they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only the religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud, and, like swine, serve only their swinish appetites, their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and that is the gratification of their ravenous appetite; cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the

most common earth, and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat; so when the christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet, and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them “beware of dogs,” and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, Ye “are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast our pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend us.

Middletown, N.Y.,
November 1, 1862

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 282 - 287

MATTHEW VII. 7, 8.

“Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

These words are plain and emphatic, and sufficiently simple to be comprehended by the merest infants among the children of God, whose minds are unbiased by false teaching. But such has been the indefatigable zeal of the enemies of the Lord, to pervert the Scriptures of truth, that even these words of our divine Master, have been strangely misconstrued, and it is to be feared that some of God’s dear children have been imposed upon by the enemy, in regard to their real meaning. To understand properly any Scripture, especially the text under consideration, it is indispensably necessary that we should observe who is the speaker, and who are the subjects of address, as well as the true meaning of what is spoken. The Scriptures generally are a communication from God himself. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and God spake to the fathers, the ancient patriarchs, by the prophets, so that their inspired communications to Israel were no less the words of God than that which he has in these last times spoken to us by his Son. The words of our text were spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and therefore must be regarded as clothed with all the power and infallibility of the supreme and eternal Godhead. They are entitled to the sacred reverence which we have for him from whose lips they were spoken. No one, we conclude, who fears the Lord and trembles at the majesty of his words, would designedly pervert their meaning, or countenance their perversion by others. But so it is, as we shall presently show, this with the general tenor of the Scriptures is most awfully misrepresented, distorted,

misinterpreted and misapplied, by very many who claim to be the children of God, and minsters of the gospel. By them it is generally, and perhaps we may say universally, applied to mankind in general, and to the unconverted or unregenerated, in particular. Those who contend for what they call “Free agency,” offered salvation on conditions to be performed by men, human ability to repent and believe the gospel, to exercise faith in Christ, to love God, and to secure their own eternal salvation by their own wills and works, frequently repeat the words of our text, and other passages in the same connection, with an air of assumed triumph, as though they either believed themselves, or intended to make others believe, that these words were addressed by our Lord to the human family at large, and to the most ungodly in a special manner. They even go farther, and represent that the God of glory was in the act of expostulating with unrenewed sinners, and laboring to induce them to apply to him for salvation. As though the subject on which our Lord was speaking, was to show how possible it was, and how very cheaply every sinner might save himself. That if the sinner can be prevailed on to seek for religion, he shall find it; if they will seek for Christ, they shall find him; and if they will seek for justification before God, and eternal life and happiness, they shall find it. That if they will knock at heaven’s gate, the portals of immortal glory shall on that condition be thrown open to them, &c. A careful examination of the Scriptures however, will show to those unto whom it is given to know the things of the kingdom of Christ, that such a gross perversion of the text is a most presumptuous and blasphemous contradiction, both of the letter and spirit of what our Savior said, and also of the uniform testimony of all the record of the holy Scriptures on the subject.

Instead of addressing the words and assurances of the text to the world of mankind indiscriminately, or to ungodly sinners in particular, they were spoken exclusively to his

disciples, and we have his own authority for saying that they apply to no other characters. At the commencement of the fifth chapter, we are informed of the peculiar circumstances of the occasion, when Christ delivered this discourse, or "sermon on the mount," as it is called, which is given in the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters, and of which our text is an important part. It reads thus, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying," &c. Now if he had intended this discourse to apply to sinners indiscriminately, why did he retire from the multitudes and address it exclusively to his disciples? Why, if it concerned the multitudes, did he not address it to them? Can any mortal tell? Again, if he were only speaking to his disciples of things which were applicable to the multitudes of the unconverted, why did he address his words to them, in the second person, *ye* and *you,* instead of *they* or *them?* Will any one dare to charge that he did not know the proper use of words, or that he would say one thing, and mean another, and that, too, essentially different from what he said? If in our text he had been speaking of asking for, and receiving regeneration; seeking for, and finding pardon; knocking, and thereupon having the doors of mercy, or salvation, or of eternal life, opened to them, then they unto whom the words were addressed, were those of all men, unto whom they had the least application, for as his disciples they were regenerated already, and he said they followed him in the regeneration, they had already received the forgiveness of their sins, and could, and did experimentally know, and unequivocally testified that, "The Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins." And in so testifying, Jesus said to the rulers of the Jews, "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," &c. They had already been admitted into the kingdom of the Messiah; had already entered into life, and already stood freely justified in the Savior's righteousness, before the throne of God. Why then, we

repeat the question, did he retire from the multitudes, and speak these words only to his disciples? If he had designed these words to express a conditional offer of salvation to unconverted sinners, is it not rational to believe that he would have availed himself of so favorable an opportunity as he had before he departed from the multitudes? How irrational then to suppose that with these words on his lips for the multitudes, that he who is too wise to err, should have deliberately left those to whom he designed his words to apply, and who, more than all the others, were the most vitally interested in them, and without uttering one word of the kind to the indiscriminate multitudes, ascend a mountain, and when his disciples came to him, open his mouth, and deliver to them the message which he had intended for the very multitudes which he on that occasion purposely avoided.

Another equally conclusive and irresistible testimony in the Scriptures, against the heresy of the Arminian notion, that God has offered salvation to all who will seek for it, is found in the words of our Lord in reply to his disciples, when they had asked him if there were many that would be saved. In this case observe the subject was salvation, and concerning the extent of salvation, Jesus said in reply, not to the world, but to his disciples, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek and shall not be able.” Who can believe it possible that our Lord should at one time say that all sinners who seek for salvation shall be saved, and at another time declare positively that many should seek, and should not be able to enter in at the strait gate, which leadeth into life? To say nothing of the absurdity of the notion of blind men’s seeking, and dead men’s knocking, &c., it is enough for us to know that Christ is sought of them that asked not for him, and that he is found of them that sought him not. That Israel (that is carnal Israel) hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. (Rom. xi. 7). “But Israel, which followed after

the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone: as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumblingstone and rock of offense: and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed." - Rom. ix. 31-33. God has bidden his Israel to seek, (not to procure their salvation by deeds of the law, or works of righteousness which their own hands have done, or can do,) but he has commanded them to seek his face. He said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye my face, in vain. It was not in vain that he has said unto his spiritual Israel, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." It is because none but God can save a sinner, that God commands his Israel to look to him for salvation, and to him alone; for in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory. Not in themselves, nor in their resolvings, nor in their seekings or doings, for the Lord has made bare his holy arm, and the ends of the earth shall see his salvation. He shall say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back. He will gather them from the east and from the west, and shall also say, Bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by my name, for I have created him for my glory, &c. When he who is the good Shepherd putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. When dead in sins, they are made to hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. Who are the dead that shall hear, and that shall live? Christ has himself settled this question, "My sheep hear my voice"; because he has put them forth, gone before them, and called them by name. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." We have shown, by such testimony as men will not disregard with impunity, that the

words of our text were spoken by Christ, and addressed to his disciples exclusively; that it is audacious presumption in those who labor to pervert his words, and to turn the truth of God into a lie. It remains now for us to show who are the disciples, and in what sense these words were applied to them, and the eternal consolation which they afford to such as are his disciples indeed.

They only are recognized in the New Testament as his disciples, who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him. To be born again, born of the Spirit, and born into the light and love of the Redeemer, affords evidence that we are the children, and heirs of immortality; but some of God's children walk in disobedience, at least for a season; but in their disobedience to him as their Prince and Savior, their Leader and King, they are not scripturally speaking, his disciples, though they be his children. The disciples who went to him in the mount, and who listened to his discourse, were those who had not only passed from death unto life, but they had forsaken all, and followed him; to them therefore his promises in his discourse were, and to such now, are applicable. "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." He had told them in a former part of his sermon, or discourse, of the special providential care which their heavenly Father had over them, that he feeds the ravens, and protects the sparrows, clothes the grass, and beautifies the frail lilies of the field, and that he would also provide all things needful for them. Although exposed to the rage of their enemies, disfranchised as citizens, cast out of the synagogues, and even driven from their houses and homes, they need not distrust the goodness and constant providence of their God, or say, What shall I eat, or what shall I drink, or wherewithal shall I be clothed? for their heavenly Father knoweth that they have need of all these things. They were directed to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all

these things shall be added unto them. The kingdom of God, and his righteousness, then, was that they were to seek, and our text assures us that they would not seek in vain, for they shall find. None but those who are born again, can seek that kingdom successfully, for except a man be born again, he cannot see it; and we cannot be qualified to seek for things which we cannot see. But Christ had said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear." To them it was given to know the things of the kingdom; but to them that are without, it was not given. Therefore he said to his disciples, apart from the multitudes, Seek, and ye shall find, as they were directed to ask, and it should be given to them. He had taught them to pray, and to ask God to give them their daily bread, deliver them from evil, protect them from temptation, and forgive their trespasses, &c., and in our text he assures them that they shall not ask in vain, for these things shall be given to them. If earthly parents knew how to give good gifts to their children, how much more should your heavenly Father? for he told some who claimed to be children of God, that if God were their Father, they would believe on him; but he said they were of their father the devil. To the children of God belongs the privilege to ask, with the assurance that they shall find the kingdom of God, and his, God's, righteousness; and to knock, and the doors of deliverance from all their fear shall be opened unto them. Of them, as the disciples of the Redeemer, it may truly be said, "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." What encouragement is here for the tried disciples of the Lord Jesus, while well they know that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution, yet amidst all their conflicts, their God is within hearing. He rideth upon the heavens in their help, and in his excellency

on the sky.

May the kind assurances with which the new covenant abounds to them, be set home with power and grace to the heart of all who love the Lord, and may we be encouraged to trust in, and rely upon, him, constantly, firmly and forever.

Middletown, N. Y.
July 15, 1855.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 229 - 236

MATTHEW 8:11, 12

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east, and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Agreeable to the request of our correspondent, William Dine, of Ohio, we present to our readers such views as we have on the passage proposed above. After our Lord had delivered to his disciples what is commonly called his sermon on the mount, and had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. The miracles which he wrought had produced much excitement among the people, insomuch that he had taken occasion to retire from the crowd and to instruct his disciples alone in the discourse, the record of which occupies the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of this evangelist. But the eager multitudes were ready to crowd around him again as soon as he returned from his retirement. The multitudes appear to have been composed of a variety of classes of the community, and among them the comparatively small band of his disciples, others desiring to be healed of their infirmities and some undoubtedly to gratify their curiosity. Some of the vast assemblage were Jews, some Samaritans and some Gentiles, Scribes, and Pharisees, publicans and sinners. Among the rest a centurion, or commander of a small party of Roman soldiers, the captain of one hundred men; this man seemed deeply impressed with a sense of his own unworthiness to receive so distinguished a guest under his roof, besought him on behalf of his servant who was grievously tormented with palsy, that he would speak the word only and he was perfectly confident that his servant would be healed. At this display of unexampled faith and that, too, in an officer in the Roman army, a poor Gentile

sinner, our Lord said that he had not found such faith; no, not in Israel. And then he added the words which are placed at the head of this article.

"And I say unto you." The sayings which he uttered were of the very highest authority; their truth and power were inferrable from the fact that they proceeded from his unerring lips. They were addressed to the great multitudes which followed him, and were full of comfortable instruction to the poor Gentiles who had hitherto been unaccustomed to receive such intimations that God had a people among them which should be called by his grace and made meet to be partakers with the children of light. This instance of a Gentile sinner having faith in Christ should not stand solitary and alone upon the future records of the grace of God abounding to the chief of sinners. "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west." This declaration though new to the astonished multitudes was well known to him, when as yet there were no depths, and before the worlds were made. It was embraced in the settlements of eternity not only that many should come from the east and the west, but also that the "north should give up, and the south should not keep back His sons should come from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by 1,18 name; for I have created him; for my glory I have formed him. Yea, I have made him, saith the Lord." Isa. xliii. 5-7. Again, chapter xl. 3, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Again in Isa. xli. 9, "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Compare these predictions of Isaiah with the words of Christ in John vi. 37. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." And also Jno. x. 16, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they

shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." Our text assures us that many shall come, and John who saw them in his vision says that no man can number them, and this assurance is sufficient for the faith of God's elect, the promise embraces, "every one that is called by my name." Every such one God has created for his glory, and Christ has promised that he will raise them up at the last day. The promise is therefore to all that are afar *off,* even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

"And shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven, though prepared for the heirs of glory as an inheritance before the foundation of the world, was not seen descending from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband, until in the order of time Christ had redeemed the subjects of it from under the law, and freely justified them through the redemption which is in him. When he had done and suffered all the demands of law and justice on their behalf, and had risen from the dead for their justification, he ascended up on high, and in that exaltation he told his disciples that he went to receive the kingdom. His Father had appointed him a kingdom, and he had appointed unto them a kingdom in like manner; and it was the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom to his little flock. This is the kingdom which Daniel said the God of heaven should set up, that should never be destroyed, and it is frequently in the New Testament called the kingdom of heaven. Christ says that it is not of this world; John says it come from God out of heaven, and Jesus says it was prepared for them who are on his right hand from the foundation of the world. A more particular description in agreement with our text is given in Hebrews xii. 18-29. In this the inspired writer says to those who have come and still are coming to sit down in it, "For ye are not come to the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a

trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more," etc. showing that the kingdom of Heaven, the gospel church, is not set up under the Levitical priesthood, nor under the Sinai covenant, for under that dispensation all was toil and labor, no rest, no sitting down. But in the setting up of the gospel kingdom Moses the servant is dead, Jordan is passed, and Canaan is entered. Sinai's thunders are hushed, the voice of words which terrified the carnal Israelites are no more spoken, but these who have "come from the east and the west are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." etc. This mount Sion, this heavenly Jerusalem, this city of the living God, is the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom into which all the redeemed of the Lord out of every nation, kindred, language, and tongue are brought, when translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And hither they are brought not to terrors and toils of the law, but to the rest and liberty of the gospel of Christ; and here they sit down in the kingdom of heaven, though they were strangers and foreigners, they are made nigh by the blood of Christ. They are born of the spirit, and by that birth qualified for spiritual enjoyments. Except a man be born again he cannot see this kingdom; except he be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into it. Christ is himself the door, by him they enter, and he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish; the kingdom into which they have come is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that can never end. They are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith. Their fellow-citizens and associates in this heavenly Jerusalem are an innumberable company of angels, in general assembly convened, including all the church of the

First Born which are written in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect are included in this general assembly, consequently Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob are there, and with them are poor Gentile sinners, redeemed from sin and wrath, by the blood of Christ and called by grace, renewed by the spirit, and taught of God, sit down. The patriarchs and prophets and all the Old Testament saints are equally with those of the present dispensation, interested savingly in Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and in the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Hence they all sit down together in this kingdom of Heaven, as the spiritual and loyal subjects of the king whom God has set upon his holy hill Zion. Here they receive a kingdom which cannot be moved, in which:

"The saints on earth, and all the dead
But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living Head,
And of his grace partake."

Christ as the Mediator has but one kingdom that we are informed of, and that kingdom embraces all which are written in heaven. The spirits of many of the justified family of God are now above, some of them are still upon these low grounds of sorrow and affliction; and some, we hope, are yet to come from the east and west until every one that is called by his name, and created for his glory take their seats with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Nor can these seats be deranged. The sons of Zebedee could not be accommodated according to the desire of their fond mother; for the seats were already appropriated, and shall be given to those for whom they were prepared by the Father. So perfect and complete are the provisions of grace and mercy, in the preparation of the kingdom and destination of its subjects that no change can improve it. No other disposition of the seats will ever be made, for God who had designated the

occupant of each is of one mind, and changeth not. His plans cannot be improved, for they are established in infinite wisdom and goodness.

But in the consummation of all this gracious purpose, “the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness.” By the children of the kingdom which shall be cast out we understand the fleshly decendants of these holy patriarchs, the Old covenant was to give place to the new. The Old Jerusalem was to be destroyed and her subjects scattered abroad in outer darkness, their temple prostrated, their rites and peculiar institutions abolished, and the handwriting thereof blotted out. This had long been predicted, and the execution of the predictions was near at hand when Jesus made the declaration in our text. Their organization as a kingdom or commonwealth was but a limited one, and by its original limitation was to continue only until the Shiloh should come, and at his advent the gatherings of his people should be unto him. He should gather his sheep from all the regions of Judea, and them also which were not of that fold, he also must gather, and the carnal Israelites should be driven into outer or heathenish darkness utterly dispossessed of all their former privileges, in darkness and blindness, to remain until the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in.

“There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” In the execution of the judgments of God upon them, they would weep; but not with that penitential grief which results from godly sorrow for their sins, but that sorrow which is of the world, which worketh death, and which is connected with gnashing with their teeth. While smarting in keen anguish under the mighty hand of their avenging God, they would resent his righteous judgments and blaspheme his holy name. This has been clearly exemplified in their rejection and crucifixion of Christ, and in their bitter persecution against

the apostles and early saints; and their settled opposition to the cause of christianity down to the present day.

Perhaps we have written enough to express to our friend, Dine, and to our readers in general, what are our views of the text. If our views were better, more lucid, and clear, he and they should be just as welcome to them. They are such, however, as we have, and we only ask that they may be read carefully and prayerfully, tried by the unerring standard, and received only so far as we have been enabled to present them in harmony with the word and spirit of truth and righteousness.

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 1, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 68 - 74

MATTHEW VIII. 11, 12,

Dear Brother: I address you tonight for the first time, for the purpose of asking your views on Matt. viii. 11, 12.

The Old Baptists here are well pleased with the *Signs of the Times,* so far as I have heard. May the Lord enable you to continue to contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

LOVETT LEE.
Paint Rock, Ark., April 3, 1861.

Reply: The text proposed reads thus: "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." These words appear to have been spoken by our Lord soon after he had come down from the mountain where he had preached the sermon on the mount. Having finished the instructions to his disciples, and descended from the mountain, a great multitude of people thronged around him, and in their presence he touched and healed a filthy leper. And when he was entered into Capernaum, an officer of the Roman army came and besought him in behalf of a servant of his who was sick of the palsy and grievously tormented, and Jesus also healed the centurion's servant. This display of miracles very naturally excited the jealousy of the Jews, who regarded the touching of a leprous person as a violation of their laws, and the favoring of a Roman centurion as little if any less defiling. But when he had positively declared that he had not found so great faith in Israel, or among the Jews, as this centurion manifested, the surprise and astonishment of the self-conceited pharisees must have been raised to the

highest degree. And yet he had something more to tell them, that many shall come from the east and west, even of publicans and harlots, as he had elsewhere declared, and shall sit down with the patriarchs and prophets, and these self-righteous pharisees be cast out. Publicans and harlots, redeemed and washed in Jesus' blood, and clothed in his spotless righteousness, shall be qualified to participate in the spiritual privileges of the gospel kingdom, while children of the kingdom, or those who legally occupied that position, should be cast out. As the Canaanites were cast out of the promised land, to make room for the heirs of the promise which God had before made to Abraham, so the carnal Israelites should be severed from Abraham, the true olive tree, for the grafting in of the Gentiles. In the sermon on the mount, Christ had declared, Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom. The kingdom in its gospel organization is spiritual, and human righteousness is insufficient to qualify any one to enter it, therefore Jesus has declared most positively that except a man be born again, born of the water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter it. No legal righteousness can exceed the righteousness of scribes and pharisees; but the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of the Son of God, does exceed. And Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, (his people,) that we should be made the righteousness of God in him. This will do; with this even publicans and harlots are cleansed and made holy, and unto them is Christ made wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. And this is his name whereby he shall be called. The Lord our Righteousness. Men are fatally mistaken when they presume that their works of righteousness or obedience to the law will justify them before God, for, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God. Justifying righteousness is not of the law. If a law had been given that could give life, righteousness should be by the law, but that no man is justified by the

deeds or works of the law is evident from the fact that, The just shall live by faith. Hence, Paul, who understood precisely the difference between the righteousness of men and the righteousness of God, could cheerfully forego everything else, that he might be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

Christ could and did declare beforehand that many of those shall come from the east and west, and, as in another text he adds, and from the north and south, from every point of the compass, and as his members, clothed with the garment of his salvation, covered with the robe of his righteousness, they shall enter his kingdom, come with songs and everlasting joy to his Zion, and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. There in his kingdom shall they sit down with Abraham, having the faith, not the flesh, of Abraham. If ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise. The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are recognized for the seed. These are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John the Baptist told the scribes and pharisees to think not to say they had Abraham to their father; that plea was sufficient to admit them to a standing with carnal Israelites under the law, but now the axe is laid at the root of the trees and every fruitless tree is cut down; and all the trees are barren until they are first made good trees, and then the fruit will be good, for a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor can an evil tree bring forth good fruit. But God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

The carnal Israelites were in the kingdom, as it existed under the ceremonial law, in the types. But that dispensation is abolished, and they, as children of the kingdom, in that sense

are cast out, as was the rich man in the parable, while Lazarus is now in the bosom of Abraham, and a great gulf is fixed between them. Gentile sinners redeemed from all the tribes of the earth are gathered into communion with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the carnal seed are cast out into outer darkness. The kingdom of Christ is illuminated internally, the Lord God and the Lamb are the light of it; but without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. With these the carnal workmongers are associated, and of their doom they shall partake. The light which is in them, of which they boast, is darkness, and it is outer darkness, and how great is that darkness. Darkness signifies death, the opposite of life. In the Word, which was made flesh, is life, and the life is the light of men. The opposite of that life and light is outer darkness, and in it shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Weeping, when it proceeds from contrition, shows a godly sorrow, working repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. The first shows the work and yields the fruits of the Spirit, but the latter is accompanied by wrath, violence and gnashing of teeth, unreconciliation to God, opposition to holiness, and implacable enmity to the truth and all who hold and love the truth.

As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; so we see the declaration not only bears upon the carnal Israelites, but extends to all who are of the works of the law or rather all who are seeking for justification by obedience to the precepts of the law, and to commend themselves to the divine favor by their own works; they are all of them in outer darkness, and have not light to see that salvation is by grace alone, not of works, lest any man should boast. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing

of the Holy Ghost. But the very darkness which hides these things from the eyes of the wise and prudent, they call light, while all the things of the Spirit are unto them foolishness, and they call it darkness. Such was the wretched condition of all men by nature, and those who are now translated from the power of darkness into God's marvelous light were by nature children of wrath even as others, but God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ. It surely is no less than the works of God himself. "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

"Then give all the glory to his holy name;
To him all the glory belongs;
Be your the high joy still to sound forth his fame,
And crown him in each of your songs."

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 495 - 499

MATTHEW IX. 12, 13.

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

The occasion on which our Lord spake these words, is stated in the preceding connection. After he had called Matthew, who was a publican, it came to pass that he sat at meat in the house, and behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, "Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?" When Jesus heard that, he said unto them, namely, to the Pharisees, "They that be whole need not a physician."

In the figurative language of our Lord, he assumes the character of a physician, and in that character came to cure those who were diseased and unable to cure themselves, but the Pharisees of that day, like those of our times, supposed that his mission was to them that were whole: to receive the complimentary greetings of the pious, the self-righteous, and those who had never known the exceeding sinfulness of sin, nor felt themselves guilty and helpless sinners against God, and to bestow on them high encomiums for their zeal and piety. As a Physician, they felt no need of him. They were Abraham's seed, and never in bondage to any man, and indignantly spumed the idea of being made free by him. They, like their brethren of the present age, no doubt held the doctrine of *free agency,* and being totally ignorant of their leprous and diseased condition, gloried in their own conceited righteousness. But our Redeemer informed them that his object in coming into the world was to seek and to

save that which was lost. He had come to display his power and skill, and healing medicines on those who knowing their malady could appreciate them.

"They that be whole need not a physician." Jesus had come down from heaven for the benefit of the needy, and not for any who were able to dispense with his services. It would be a waste to bestow skill, labor and healing medicines on those who being whole do not need them; but the work of the Savior was not to be wasted nor misapplied. Having thus reproved their blindness and ignorance of his character, object and work, and thereby justified his course in associating with publicans and sinners, of which they had complained, he bade them "Go, and learn what that meaneth; I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; for I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Although more than eighteen hundred years have elapsed since he gave this task to the scribes and pharisees, and although they have monopolized all the Colleges and Theological Schools which have existed in the world from that day to this, for the purpose of teaching religion as a science to men, they have not to this hour found out the meaning of our Savior's words. Not because of any ambiguity or want of clearness in the words, for no language could be more plain, simple and emphatic, but because the words referred to the Mediatorial work of Christ, and therefore involved a spiritual subject, of which no natural man can possess any knowledge. Up to this day all pharisees, willworshipers, free agents, workmongers and Arminians in general, suppose that Christ came not so much to minister, as to be ministered unto; to receive gifts, sacrifices, honor and fame, as though his object was to enrich himself. But they did not then understand his character nor his object; neither do they now, for the same description of religionists to this day prove by their doctrines and their works that although they have been "ever learning, they have never been able to come to a knowledge of the

truth.” In this their speech betrays them, when they talk of coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty, as though it were the Lord who stands in need of help, instead of his coming to the help of Israel, against the mighty; hence they talk of being co-workers with God, and engaged in the enterprise of converting sinners to God, in order to give Christ a kingdom, or to enlarge his dominions and add to his triumphs. Still farther, it is very common for them to represent the Lord as being bankrupt, in every sense of the word; his treasury empty, his power exhausted, and his cause languishing for the want of human aid. The people are called on to contribute funds to replenish his empty treasury, and to aid in means and instrumentalities to bring subjects under his government. Dead sinners are gravely told that he has exhausted his resources on them, that he has done all he can for them, and the next move must be made by them, or they will certainly be lost forever. They must minister to him something, if it be only to give him their deceitful and desperately wicked hearts, or his work will fail for want of such ministration. They represent him as standing and knocking at the dead sinner’s heart, for liberty to come in, until his head is filled with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, but all availing nothing until the sinner can be induced to minister to him, or offer some sacrifice to give efficiency to the Savior’s blood and righteousness.

But all this Ashdod jargon would cease forever if they knew what this meaneth, He will have mercy and not sacrifice. But this is hidden from their eyes. That he will have mercy, on condition that the sinner will approach him by sacrifice or gifts, conditions and terms, they believe, but that he will have mercy, and reject all sacrifices, is a matter they have not yet learned. That he has had mercy and not sacrifice, every heaven-born sinner knows, for he has been taught it experimentally by the Spirit. When stripped of all their works, means and instruments; when naked and bare, destitute of a

particle of righteousness in themselves, guilt-stricken, helpless and sinking in their sins, having nothing to offer, and deeply sensible that if they could command the cattle of a thousand hills, or ten thousand rivers of oil, the offering of all would avail them nothing, in their extremity they learned that he would have mercy and not sacrifice; mercy without an equivalent either in works or in gifts.

For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. If men were truly righteous, they would need no repentance, or change, but there are none righteous, as the Scriptures positively testify, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world is guilty before God, but if we were indeed righteous, as the Pharisees of ancient and of modern times claim to be, or as they would represent to the unconverted that they must make themselves before they can become recipients of God’s saving mercy, they would be beyond the reach of salvation, for Christ came not to call such, and there is salvation in none other than Christ.

This doctrine of God our Savior, while it disconcerts the proud, self-righteous pharisee, and boasting Arminian is happily adapted to the case of the lost, the helpless, the guilt-burdened, weary and and heavy ladened sinner. Here is just such a Physician as he needs to cleanse him of his leprosy. He can speak the words, “I will; be thou clean,” and a perfect cure is effected. As a Physician he understands the case of all his suffering, dying patients, and he is able to cure them all. And as they are too poor to offer him a fee for his official services, how consoling to learn that he will have no sacrifices; it is without money and without price; without fee or reward. The quickened sinner who knows that he is lost, wretched and undone, rejoices in him who came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. This is not calling them to produce repentance, nor to bring him repentance as

a condition or means of obtaining his saving grace, but he has repentance to give them, and with it the forgiveness of sins; for he will not be ministered to, but he will minister, because he is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins.

Middletown, N.Y.
May 15, 1858.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 89 - 92

MATTHEW IX. 30, 31.

DEAR AND MUCH ESTEEMED BROTHER Beebe: – If it is not asking too much, I would be much obliged if you will give your views through the SIGNS on Matthew ix. 30, 31, especially why Jesus charged those to whom he had given site to see that no man know it, and then that they spread and abroad.

ELIZABETH J. STEWART.
Hoover's Run, Feb. 18, 1880.

REPLY: – The text reads thus: "And their eyes were opened; in Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it. But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country."

This account is given of two blind man who had faith in Jesus that he was able to give them sight, and that if he should exercise his power it would be an act of mercy. Their faith or confidence was implied in their recognition of him as the Son of a David, and in their prayer for mercy and his hands, but still more clearly manifested by the manner in which that mercy was bestowed. "And Jesus said unto them, believe ye that I am able to do this? And they said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened." Whether these men had true evangelical faith in him as the Savior of sinners, as the Son of God, and that he was there Savior from sin and perdition, or not, it is clear that they had implicit confidence that he was able to open their blind eyes, and enabled them to see the surrounding things of nature; for according to their faith in his ability to give them site, it was done unto them.

Why Jesus charged them to "see that no man know it," we are not informed, and therefore will not presume to tell; but it is said in prophecy of him, "He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street," &c. – Isaiah xlii. 2. The success of his mission did not rest on any ostentatious display to make him popular in the estimation of men, and he often retired from the multitudes of men who were anxious to witness the miracles which he so frequently wrought.

It is not said that these men disobeyed the strict charge which Jesus gave them, by letting men know that Jesus had open their eyes; but it is said that they spread abroad his fame in all that country. We are not informed in what way they spread abroad his fame.

But in a spiritual application of Christ's saving power and grace in giving the light of immortal life to us, when he opened our blind eyes, and shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of his Glory shining in the face of our Redeemer, although we felt desirous to let everybody know of it, we soon found that we could not make any others see what we saw, nor understand what we felt; but still it has been the most delightful employment in which we have ever been engaged to spread far abroad the fame of our glorious Deliver.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Middletown N Y., May 15, 1880.

Signs of the Times,
Volume 48, No. 10
May 15, 1880

MATTHEW X. 27.

“What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.”

These, with other instructions, were given by our Lord Jesus Christ to the twelve apostles when about sending them out to preach in the cities of Judea to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. He gave them to understand that they had nothing of friendship or favor to expect from those among whom they were to sojourn, or unto whom they were to preach. Behold, said he, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Their mission was to men who would deliver them up to councils who would scourge them in their synagogues, and they should be brought before governors and kings.

Such being the nature of their mission, and circumstances attending the execution of it; we may safely conclude, if there ever was a time when Christ’s ministers would have occasion to be well equipped with defensive armor and weapons, with swords, spears or Sharp’s rifles, it would have been when going in the midst of enemies as hostile and as deadly as wolves are to sheep. But no such warlike instruments, nor even staves, by which they might keep the very dogs at bay, were allowed them. Human wisdom would suggest, at least, as they were going into the midst of such implacable enemies, they should be able to fall back on their own resources, and to enable them to do so they should be well provided with a generous outfit of food, apparel, of purse and scrip, that they might know what they were to eat and drink, and wherewithal they were to be clothed. But nothing of this was allowed; all this human economy was strictly forbidden; not a purse, or scrip, or second garment, or money, or anything else that human prudence could

suggest, was allowed. All these provisions were evidently denied them, that from necessity their trust and confidence should be alone in God for all these things.

There was also another consideration; they were to be brought before councils, governors and kings, and those, all or them, of the most hostile temper and disposition. Would it not be well for the apostles to take some lessons on the subject of parliamentary usages and military tactics, that they should be well versed in legal matters that they might know how to plead their own and their Master's cause, when before the potentates of the earth? Human wisdom would readily assent to this. But that wisdom which cometh from above will not allow it. Completely cut off from all self-dependence, Christ sent his ministers forth at that time, and thus he sends them still. And by this manifest dependence on God for safety and success, the ministers of Christ shall be distinguished from the ministers of antichrist, down to the end of the world. Perfectly harmonious with these regulations and restrictions, is the instruction given for the composition of their sermons. They were not to cull out from the sayings of men such passages as suited their fancy, and compile their discourses according to the rules of the schoolmen of the age, nor even to premeditate what they should say, but rely alone on the ever-constant providence of God, and in the same hour in which they were to speak, it should be given them what they should say. To this day there is no preaching that so comforts, warms and cheers the hearts of God's people as that which comes fresh from heaven. In the same hour in which it is received, it is handed out; it has no time to get cold nor stale.

"What I tell you in darkness." Instead of going to some popular seminary to learn what, and how, and when, and where to preach, the disciples of Christ receive their message from the same Master who gives their commission. Not what

others tell you, but what I tell you. This would be enough for them to preach, and they may well leave all other preaching to the ministers of men, and the emissaries of Satan. The ministers of Jesus should always be prepared to preach, saying, Thus saith the Lord. But there is an intimation here expressed of the manner in which Christ instructs his ministers how and what they shall preach.

"What I tell you in darkness." There is a two-fold sense in which we may understand that Christ instructs his ministers what to publish in his name, in darkness. These instructions are given them out of the sight of all others, when secluded and alone, the matter is between the servant of the living God and his divine Master and Lord: hence in this sense it is told them in darkness. How frequently in ancient and modern times has this distinguishing peculiarity identified the Lord's ministers in distinction from all others. An instance of this is given in Acts iv. 13: Two of the disciples, to whom the words of our text were immediately addressed, Peter and John, were brought before the rulers and examined, and the result was, "When they," the rulers, "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned men," that is, that they had not the embellishment of the schools, that they had not learned their theology at the feet of Gamaliel, "they marveled; and they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." Where else could they have learned to preach that gospel which is not a science, but a direct revelation, by the Spirit, from God? So it is also at this day a mystery how God qualifies his ministers to declare among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. To speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory, which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Truly the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show unto him his covenant.

The quickened and guilt-stricken sinner wonders, when hearing his case described by the minister, how the preacher came to know all about his situation; and the joyful convert and the aged pilgrim all are surprised when they hear, perhaps from one who in the flesh is a stranger, the very exercises of their own mind. The truth is, they have been told these things in darkness, or in those spiritual revelations which are out of the sight of human reason.

But there is another sense in which the ministers of Christ receive their instructions in darkness. This is in regard to their own peculiar exercises and experience. When God communicated to Abraham the things that should befall his progeny in the land of Egypt, he caused a horror of darkness to fall upon him, and it is generally, if not uniformly the case, that the most important communications of the Spirit are made to the people of God, especially to his ministers, when clouds and darkness seem to us to be round about his throne, when he keepeth back the face thereof and spreadeth his cloud upon it. He answered Job out of the whirlwind, and good old Elijah had stretched himself out to die, when God told him of more than seven thousand reserved ones who had not bowed the knee to Baal. The ground is barren and the pasture is dry indeed, where no clouds or darkness are ever known. “What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light.” Be that your theme to preach, and that your message to the people. God’s people, especially his ministers, are to have no secrets in religion. Although all the things of the Spirit are a hidden mystery to every natural man, yet, so far as the minister is concerned, he is not to shun to declare the whole counsel of God. He is to speak in the light; that is, openly, undisguisedly, and without reserve, what he has been divinely commissioned to proclaim. Freely they receive and as freely should they communicate.

“And what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.” Of course we are to understand that what they hear in the ear, has reference to spiritual and divine things. Hence, in giving instructions to his disciples, Christ said to them, “Blessed are your ears, for they hear; and blessed are your eyes, for they see.” And again, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” And in the letters to the seven churches, the language frequently occurs, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” The hearing ear, and the understanding heart, are the special gifts of God, and the evidence of spiritual life. In the quickening of God’s people, the first operation is to make them hear the voice of the Son of God. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and the saints receive the Spirit by the hearing of faith, and not by the works of the law. And the good Shepherd says, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and none shall pluck them out of my hands.” With these qualifications to hear the voice of the Redeemer, the word of the Lord comes to his people, and especially to those who are by him called, qualified and sent forth to preach his gospel, and all the communications made to them by the Spirit, are made through the circumcised ear, by which they hear and know the joyful sound. But the idea of words spoken in the ear, seems in this case to signify the things which Christ in his word, and by his Spirit, has communicated to them. These communications are made to them for the general edification of all the saints, and are therefore to be openly proclaimed. “That preach ye upon the housetops.” As a housetop is a conspicuous place, so the preacher of the gospel is not to put his light under a bushel, or under the bed, but to proclaim, as from the housetops, the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ. This admonition to the primitive disciples, who were certain, from what had just been told them, that they were soon to encounter great opposition and severe persecution for the testimony of the

truth, was calculated to impress on them the importance of faithfulness in the discharge of their duty, even when scourging, imprisonment and death, stared them in the face. To avoid the violence of persecution, or to save their lives, they are not allowed to keep back any part of the testimony, or shun to declare the whole counsel of God. Nor were they at liberty, in order to avoid the consequences, to seek retirement, or less public places, for proclaiming the truth. As the housetops were the most public places, so, in the most public manner, and in the face of the most violent opposition, were they to expose themselves to the storm, not counting their own lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. For unto them it was given, on the behalf of Christ, not only that they should believe on him, but also that they should suffer for his sake.

Middletown, N.Y.
January 15, 1857.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 420 - 425

MATTHEW X. 34-36.

Dear Sir: Will you do a subscriber the favor to give your views, through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, on Matthew X. 34-36? I have had much meditation on the subject, and shall be very much pleased to hear from you on it. A compliance with this request, at your earliest convenience, will much oblige your Baptist brother,

A. H. CHALMERS.
Georgetown, Texas, Jan. 10, 1860.

Reply: The text proposed for consideration read thus, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

The carnal Israelites in regard to the predictions in the Old Testament, of the coming of the Messiah, and of his character and work, had from the letter of the word inferred that he was coming to set up a temporal kingdom, to restore Israel to her national independence, and to preside literally on the throne of David, forever, and by his power and majesty would awe the hostile nations to peace, or destroy them as independent nations and consecrate their gain unto himself, for the enlargement of his own dominion. When they read that his name should be called the Prince of Peace, &c., they seemed naturally to infer that the peace which he should command, was such as they had enjoyed under the old covenant when the Lord delivered them from the sword, the pestilence and the famine. That is, that it should be of a temporal nature. But when he explained this matter to the disciples, they were astonished; and, although instructed by him on the subject, were very slow to comprehend the

precise meaning of his words. At one time they asked him if at that time he intended to restore the kingdom to Israel, and at a still later period they said, “But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel,” that is from the Roman government.

It is very true that Jesus Christ is, in a spiritual sense, the Prince of Peace, and that of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth, even forever. (Isaiah ix. 7.) And that he is the peace-maker and giver to his people. Having come to redeem them from the curse and dominion of the law, to satisfy the claims of eternal justice on their behalf, to carry their sorrows, bear the chastisement of their peace, that with his stripes they should be healed. He has made peace by the blood of his cross. That is, he has made reconciliation or atonement for them, and he has broken down the wall of partition which was between the Jews and Gentiles. Of twain to make one new man, and so making peace.

Also, in an experimental sense, all subjects of his saving power and grace, when they receive the atonement, experimentally, do have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. v. 1.) And truly great peace have they that love his law, and nothing shall offend them.

But in the sense of the text on which our views are called for, he did not come to send peace on the earth; but his coming was unavoidably to have an opposite effect. The work which he came to do would certainly draw out against him the most virulent opposition and persecution. He came to judge and to make war, and with his bow and his crown to ride forth conquering and to conquer. But as his kingdom is not of this world, neither himself nor his subjects were to use carnal

weapons in their warfare. For our weapons are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds. No war was made by him upon the persons or property of the enemies or his cause and kingdom; but instead of rendering to them evil for evil, when he was reviled he reviled not again; and he taught his disciples by his precepts and by his example to love their enemies, to do good, or act kindly toward those who should persecute and spitefully use them. This doctrine he exemplified when on the cross; he prayed for his murderers, saying, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Still his coming was designed to send a sword, or to send divisions upon earth; and such division as should develop the awful depravity of the human heart, and expose its enmity against God. “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth.” He had not come to new-model earthly governments, nor to interfere with secular affairs of the kingdoms of this world, nor to authorize any of his subjects to usurp authority or vice-gerency over the political institutions of this world. He had not come to decide the rights of Caesar to demand tribute from the citizens of his provinces, nor to regulate the relations of earthly thrones and powers one to another so as to place them upon more amicable terms with each other, nor to give directions or models for human governments, so as to avoid the contentions and strife of conflicting nations. Neither had he come to so change the arrangements of heaven, or so modify the providential government of heaven, as to suit it to the taste and feelings of the children of this world. He had not come to reconcile the world or the devil to his cause or kingdom, to his doctrine or the institutions of his spiritual kingdom. Neither his doctrine, nor his examples, were calculated to please or satisfy the carnal sons of men, but rather to irritate and draw them out into opposition.

"I am not come to send peace; but a sword." Not such a sword, however, as earthly warriors use, for he admonished his disciples that those who used that kind of sword should perish by it. But the sword which they were to use is "The sword of the Lord." It is described as a very sharp sword, and having two edges, so as to cut both ways; and it is mighty, through Christ, in putting to flight the armies of the aliens. This sword cannot be obtained from the armory which produced those *rifles* for which Mr. Beecher and others took up contributions in the Puritanic churches of New England and Brooklyn, a short time since, for we are informed that it proceeds out of the mouth of him on whose head were many crowns, and on whose vesture and thigh was written, King of kings and Lord of lords; whose name is called, THE WORD OF GOD. This sword was considered indispensable by the inspired apostle, when he admonished the saints, saying, "And above all things, taking the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." *Above all things.* Whatever else we may lack, we cannot do without this sword. As David said of the sword which he found in the House of God, we may also say in truth, "There is no other sword like it."

In the immediate sense of the text, we presume that our Lord used the word sword, figuratively, to signify that his coming to earth, and his work, and the commission which he would give to his servants should occasion great and violent opposition, contention and separations among men. As he himself encountered the wrath of wicked men and devils, so his followers should endure the same. These things had been done to him, in the green tree, and should be repeated on his disciples, in the dry tree. The opposition which he encountered was not unexpected. He knew full well, and told his disciples beforehand, that he should be delivered into the hands of the wicked, and of what they would do to him. And "Truly against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Herod and Pontius Pilate with

the men of Israel, and the Gentiles, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done," and as Peter charged on the Jews, "Him," Jesus, "being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

So also did he fully understand to what extent his children should be persecuted, harrassed and opposed by the dragon, the beasts, and the false prophets and all that they should endure from the world, the flesh and the devil. He came not to prevent this, but to be the occasion of its development.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother," &c. Not that christianity, or the Spirit of Christ in his people, will make children less dutiful, obedient or affectionate to their parents, by any mean; for that is not the case, as we see by the admonitions which are given by the apostles, to children to honor and obey their parents, servants their masters, and subjects their superiors in authority.

And the inspired writer portrays the most unchristian character to be one who is *without natural affections.* How then does his coming set a man at variance with his father,? &c. The version of this given Luke xii. 52, 53, may serve to illustrate viz: "For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three, the father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." See also Micah viii. 6. From these passages we learn that families will be divided by the discriminating grace of God, in calling some of them to a knowledge and love of the truth, and leaving others in their enmity to oppose them. In this application, we have very many

examples where those who are born of God, and taught by the Spirit, have to encounter the opposition of fathers, mothers, and near and dear kindred in the flesh, and in some instances, according to the word, some have literally delivered up their own children to be put to death for their faith in and fidelity to Christ; but great has been their reward in heaven. Whether by the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law anything allegorical or figurative is intended, we will not presume to decide; but of this we are certain, that families have often been divided, and have become embittered against those of their number who, for the sake of truth, have renounced their traditions.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Not only in the division and alienation of families, but every child of God has more or less experience of this last expression in his own person: the flesh warring against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; the world, with its alluring vanities; Satan with his temptations, but more than either of them, does the christian stand in fear of himself. O, says he, my carnal, wicked nature, my wretched, wandering mind, the pride of my heart, and my proneness to depart from the precepts of the Lord; are foes of my own household more potent, more subtle and mischievous than all others combined. "O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

In connection with this subject we probably ought to offer a remark on Luke xiv. 26, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." This passage, of course, cannot mean that we are literally to hate those of our kindred whom God has commanded us to love and honor. But we are to loathe that corrupt depraved nature, of which we are born of the flesh. Our love to God will centre only in that which is pure and

holy; and that love which only cleaves to the earth and earthly things cannot qualify us to be disciples of Jesus. We hate fallen, polluted, depraved human nature in our nearest and dearest relations, even as we hate it in ourselves. Not in a manner that would lessen our filial affection and kindest regard for them as parents or husbands, wives or children. When we learn what it is to hate our own lives, from a deep-felt sense of our human depravity, we shall the better understand in what sense we must hate those who are our flesh and our blood. To be a disciple of Jesus, we must love him supremely, and be ready to forsake all, however near or dear by the ties of affinity or consanguinity, and to make any other sacrifice if it be necessary, to follow him. We should be ready to part with every fleshly gratification, and prefer Jerusalem above our chief joys. We cannot serve two masters; we cannot serve God and mammon. If we sow to the flesh, we shall of the flesh reap corruption; but if we through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live, and if we sow to the Spirit, we shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

To our “Baptist brother” we will say, according to your request we have given such views as we have on the subject of your inquiry. If they shall, under the blessing of God, serve to elucidate the subject to your mind, or to edify others, we will have occasion to be humble, and to give thanks to God. Should any others have a more clear light on the subject, we hope they will let it shine.

Middletown, N.Y.
June 1, 1860.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 353 – 358

MATTHEW 11:11

"He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he (Matthew 11:11)."

The request for our views on this text will be found in our seventh number of the current volume, page 55. These words were not spoken in disparagement of John the Baptist; for, of all that had preceded him, his superior had not been found, even among the prophets and patriarchs. We are not told that John was greater than any of the Old Testament saints, but that among them that are born of women, none greater than he had appeared. He was a man sent from God, and his name was John (see John 1:6); and this name was given him by the angel of God (Luke 1:13). He came in the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as the messenger whom God sent before the face of the Messiah, and as the voice of one crying in the wilderness, etc. (Mark 1:1,2). He came in the spirit and power of Elias, who was translated; and he was the Elias which was to come (Matthew 4:5). He was a Baptist, and the honored administrator of the holy ordinance of baptism to our Lord Jesus Christ. All the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

"Notwithstanding" all this, "He that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

There is, we think, a sense in which this characteristic (the least in the kingdom) belongs to our Redeemer himself. The term *least,* we do not understand to imply unimportant, less useful, less honored, or less in any point of real greatness; but the most humble, meek and lowly. And these lovely qualities were certainly possessed and manifested more fully and conspicuously in the person of our Redeemer, in his incarnation, life and deportment on earth, than in any of his

members. He whose glory was with the Father before the world was (John 17:5); whose position was with the Father upon the Eternal Throne; who thought it not robbery to be equal with God; and who was with God in the beginning, and who was God; who is the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace; by whom and for whom all things are and were created; and by whom all things consist, whether they be principalities or powers, thrones or dominions, things visible or invisible; all are his workmanship, and all are sustained and controlled by him. But see him in his humble birth; see him in the manger; see him in subordination to his parents, serving as an humble apprentice to the carpenter's trade; see him a man of sorrow, familiar with grief, derided, insulted, reproached, persecuted, reviled, and set at naught by men; see him in agony in the garden; see him a prisoner at the bar of Pilate and of Herod; see him crowned with thorns, scourged, spit upon, and loaded with every indignity that wicked men could invent, and led away to the horrid tortures of the cross, bleeding, groaning, dying; and in all this not one complaining or revengeful word: as a sheep before his shearers, he was dumb, and opened not his mouth. See all this, and then say, was there ever such humility, meekness and lowliness of soul, as he exhibited on earth, before or since? Who, from such infinite height has humbled himself to such a depth? Who, from such unspeakable glory has willingly descended to such ignominy and humiliation? Who, that was so rich has ever volunteered to become so very poor? Who, from the adoration of shining angels and the worship of holy beings, has consented to become the scorn and derision of wicked men and devils? Who, beside the meek and lowly Lamb of God, was ever willing to be counted of no reputation? It is our impression that our dear Redeemer, in our text, referred to his own unexampled and unparalleled humiliation. He came under the law, he learned obedience, he humbled himself, even unto the death of the cross. He assumed all our

infirmities; he took on him all our sins; he bore all our reproaches; he endured the cross and despised the shame; yet, beyond all controversy, he was and is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. He who washed his disciples' feet justly claimed that he was and is their Lord and Master.

But in the kingdom of heaven, among the disciples of Christ, whosoever manifests the greatest conformity to Christ in meekness, lowliness, in humility, is esteemed the greatest among the disciples. "When Ephriam spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died (Hosca 13:1)." So our Redeemer taught his disciples that the pathway to greatness was through the valley of humiliation. When his disciples displayed an ambition to be great, having failed to settle the question of pre-eminence in their discussions among themselves, they appealed to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" The reply of our Lord to this enquiry is the most clear and explicit commentary on the text proposed by brother Sellman that can be given. So far as it relates to the comparative humility and transcendent exaltation of the children of God, showing that he who is the most like Jesus in the grace of humility is greatest in the kingdom of heaven; not in self-esteem, or self-righteousness, nor in the esteem of the world, but in approaching nearest to the standard of true greatness, as shown by the example and precepts of Jesus. As, for instance, Paul, who claimed to be less than the least of all saints, and yet not a whit inferior to the chiefest of apostles, and in some respects at least greater than John the Baptist.

When the disciples asked Jesus, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven," how forcibly did he illustrate the doctrine of Christian humility and godly eminence. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter

into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 28:2-4)." And further he said, "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." By this divinely authorized standard, the more humble and child-like the disciple becomes, the greater will be his resemblance to the meek and lowly Savior, of whom he learns, and whose yoke he is called to bear. This true greatness does not consist in being more prominent in position, as John the Baptist or Paul were, for says Paul, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; and though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing (I Corinthians 13:1-3)." The poor little child of God, who has no gift of tongues, who can only lisp the name of his adorable Redeemer, if blessed with humility, is childlike, lamb-like and Christ-like; he is greater in the kingdom of heaven than those who possess the most eloquent and commanding powers of oratory, or shine the brightest in the eyes of men. The vain ambition of the two sons of Zebedee and their mother, that they might occupy distinguished places of prominence and honor in the kingdom which was about to be organized excited the other ten disciples with indignation against them. Instead of elevating, it depreciated them in the eyes of their brethren, as that yam ambition always does, when displayed among Christians. "But Jesus called them unto him and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great

exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you." No aristocratic distinctions, no despotic dominion, no lording over God's heritage, should ever be allowed in the church of God. "But whosoever will be great among you, let him by your minister." That is, to perform the duties of a waiting servant; "and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant," or (as in the margin) *your slave* (Matthew 20:26,27). Let such occupy the very lowest places, and let the humble be honored, for their child-like and unaspiring disposition; for "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased, and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." Scribes, Pharisees and hypocrites loved the chief places in the synagogues, and to be called Rabbi; but Jesus forbids such titles to his children. May we all learn of Jesus to be humble, holy, harmless and undefiled, and suppress within us all desire for any other greatness. When we glory, may it be only in the Lord.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.
July 1, 1864.

Republished - THE REMNANT
September-October, 1996
Volume 10, No. 5

MATTHEW XIII. 15-17.

BROTHER Keller, of Virginia, desires our views of Matthew xiii. 15-17, and whether this rule is alike applicable in cases of a public and private nature. At an early period in the primitive church the question arose among the disciples, and as they could not exactly agree among themselves, they brought the question for a decision to the Master, viz.: "Who is the greatest in the kingdom?" Our Lord did not tell them that Peter, James, or John, or the Pope, or the Bishop, was the greatest; nor did he say directly, as he might with great propriety, that this honor belonged to him exclusively. He understood them to mean the greatest among the disciples. How many of them had anticipated the palm we are not informed; but it is natural to conclude that the disputants at least were actuated by ambitious, if not absolutely arrogant feelings – feelings very unbecoming them as the disciples of him that is meek and lowly. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them; and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." What a lesson for their instruction! what a reproof for their ambition! and what an example for their guide! "Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Strictly speaking, Christ is the only one that has ever humbled himself in the manner described; others have been truly humbled under his mighty hand, and Christ is beyond all dispute greatest in the kingdom. The more child-like, therefore, his disciples are, the more are they like Jesus.

With this preliminary instruction, our Lord proceeded to admonish the disciples of the unavoidable occurrence of offences, and how they should deport themselves when such offences should come. Although such offenders as cannot be

reclaimed in the gospel manner are to be expelled, however conspicuous their standing or important their station, although they may be to the church as the right eye or the right hand is to the body, we are not to indulge in carnal reasoning, nor suffer anything to be done by partiality. With all the severity which the order of the house of God demands, gentleness, meekness, and a desire to reclaim an erring brother, is to mark the course of the disciples one towards the other. This lesson is set home by the most admirable argument contained in the scriptures: "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost;" and this declaration is beautifully illustrated by the man that had an hundred sheep, of which one is lost; he goeth into the mountain to seek the truant sheep, and when he has found it, he rejoiceth over its restoration more than over those which had not strayed. Now is this christian-like? Then it is the proper course for christians to pursue when any have strayed from the footsteps of the flock.

"Moreover," besides these general lessons of instruction, which are always to be observed by the saints, "if thy brother shall trespass against thee." We cannot understand this to mean any particular kind of trespass, as to smite thee, rob thee, slander thee, or even that the trespass shall be against *thee* personally; but if thy brother shall trespass, or transgress the laws of Christ, so as to effect thy fellowship towards him, then the duty becomes indispensable to apply the instruction which follows: "You that are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness." It is not said, If thy brother trespass against thee *privately*, then tell him his fault between thee and him alone; nor is it said, If he trespass against thee *publicly;* but, If he trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. Observe the figure laid down – one sheep has gone astray. It is sufficient that he has gone from the ninety-nine; no matter whether he went off secretly or openly, he has gone, and must be looked

up. As the Son of man came to save that which was lost, we are to be Christ-like, and go in pursuit of the stray brother, with a becoming desire to render him a real service in restoring him to his place.

We are aware of some of the objections to the application of this rule to cases of open or public transgression; and there are also some arguments used against its application to offences of a strictly private character. A case is supposed: a brother has been seen and heard in open court, to curse and swear, and deny that he has any knowledge of Jesus Christ. This offence was open and before the world, in presence of the enemies of the cross of Christ; now what is to be done in this case? Certainly an individual brother, although he might convince the offender of his error, has not the power to exonerate the offender from his responsibility to satisfy every member of the church; but still he is a stray sheep, and should be sought for. Now, to follow the direction and rule under consideration, how shall he proceed? To us it appears that this should be the course: My brother, I am grieved with your conduct; you have inflicted a deep wound upon your brethren in denying our dear Lord and Master, and in the profane language which you used on the occasion; do you still persist in that course, or are you convinced of your error, and ready to make acknowledgments of your wrong? Now suppose the brother says, as David said to Nathan, “I have sinned,” and manifests the same contrition that David did, what will the laboring brother require to heal the wound? Will he not say, I rejoice that God has given you repentance for the wrong, and filled your heart with godly sorrow for your transgression; and if the matter were only known to myself, here the difficulty should end; but you know, my brother, that this offence was committed openly, and has come or must come to the ears of all your brethren; they are or will be as sensibly grieved as I have been. Now do you not see the importance of leaving here thy gift before the altar, and

going immediately to be reconciled to the brethren? Go confess to them as you have now to me, and they will rejoice to receive you; yea, they will rejoice more over you than over ninety-nine just persons that need no repentance. If this offending brother's contrition be genuine, will he hesitate one moment? Will he not rather hasten to acknowledge his fault, and do all in his power to remove the stumbling block which he has been the unhappy occasion of? Would not such a course be in the spirit of the instruction of this eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and much better calculated to restore the offender, (if he be a subject of grace) than to simply cite him to be and appear before the church, and make satisfaction to the church for offences of a public nature? Where a real disposition exists to restore a wandering brother in the spirit of meekness, there is seldom any difficulty in understanding the mode of procedure directed. But when a difficulty occurs, (as, alas! too many have) where, instead of the spirit being grieved, the *old man* is mad, and seeks occasion to be avenged or to retaliate, it is astonishing how very exact he can be in requiring his offending or accused brother to pay the utmost farthing. How keen the eye to detect the difference between a public or a private offence. If public, he says, I will make it still more public – I will let the world see how much worse that brother is than I am. I will not go and labor to reclaim him; it is his duty to come before the church and confess, and if he should be excluded it will serve him right. Such a person will plead eloquently for scripture rule, but remain stupidly inconsiderate of the application of that rule to his own case. We would by no means be understood that it is unimportant that christians should be at all times and under all circumstances governed strictly by the scriptures of the New Testament; but we do object to that selfish construction of the word which would lead a brother to pursue a fellow-member out of the church, without laboring to reclaim him in

the spirit of the directions laid down by our Lord in the chapter under consideration.

Again, instances have not been lacking where an individual has been conscious that he had given just cause for complaint, but, instead of being melted down with contrition for his wrong, he coolly sets about making his defence. In his turn he becomes amazingly tenacious for an exact conformity to certain instructions of the scriptures; or rather for his version of them. Now, says he, if I have offended let my brethren pursue the course laid down in the 18th of Matthew, or I will give them no satisfaction; I'll let them know that I know something about church discipline, and if I have offended my brother, he is required to come and tell me my fault, &c.; let him, therefore, come to me if he wants anything. Is there a particle of gospel exercise manifested in this sort of contending for bible rule, while such scripture as requires the accused to go and be reconciled to his brother is altogether unheeded?

We have heard this argument also used in some cases: If a brother should inflict an injury upon a brother in private, so that the sufferer has not the means to prove his charge, that he is bound to bear the grief without pursuing the course of labor enjoined in this chapter, because that he cannot establish every word by two or three witnesses. But we trust this mode of reasoning does not prevail very extensively. The rule makes all necessary provision, for instance: My brother offends me privately; the facts of the case are known to none but ourselves. I go and tell him his fault, as directed, between him and me; he will not hear me. I then take what is called the second step of labor; taking one or two brethren we visit him; now before these brethren he denies all the facts in the case. I affirm and he denies; and if I proceed to tell it to the church, his word is supposed to be as good as

mine, and the church, it is thought, cannot decide upon the just merits of the case for want of clearer testimony.

But let it be remembered, I am to go in obedience to the command of Christ, in the spirit of Christ, and of course trusting the issue to him; (if I perish, I perish,) and in the second step of the labor, also trusting in God, I cannot be without sufficient witness. I have the very best of witness. My one or two brethren and myself make up the number of two or three, and being assembled to labor with an offending brother in obedience to Christ, we are together in his name, and we have the assurance that he is in our midst. This assurance is given in the same chapter and in the same connection with the rule, and Jesus says every word shall be established, and he will make good the pledge, so that when the matter is brought before the church, if the directions of Christ have been truly observed there is no possibility of failure in regard to the issue.

Before we close our remarks we wish to say that, although we fully believe this rule is always binding on individuals, requiring them thus to proceed in all cases, whether public or private, yet we do not believe that the church, in her church capacity, is always bound to see that private labor has been taken, before she can consistently exercise that authority which is vested in her for dealing with transgressors. Cases may occur in open church meeting, requiring the immediate reproof of the church before all, that others may fear, &c. But in all cases where a charge is brought before the church against a member by an individual member, we do not believe that it is the duty of the church, before acting upon the church, to see that the first and second steps of gospel labor have been duly taken according to the rule.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
May 1, 1845

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 546 – 552

MATTHEW XIII. 24-30, & JOHN XVII. 6

ELDER G. BEEBE & SON: – As I do not remember ever having asked you a question, if it will not trouble you too much I will now ask two. In Matthew xiii we find the field is the world. Does man represent the field, in which the good and bad seed were sown? In John xvii. 6: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me." Were these men (or church) given to Christ, or was Christ given to the men (or church), to be crucified for their offenses, and raised again for their justification? I understand that Christ was given to the church as the violated law demanded blood, which man could not pay and live again.

Your brother in hope of life everlasting,
J. D. PARKER.
Birdsville, Texas, Feb. 13, 1880

REPLY: – We confess our lack of ability to expound, with much satisfaction to our own mind, the parables which were spoken to the multitudes by our Lord, only so far as we are instructed in regard to their meaning and application by the interpretation of them which he gave to his disciples. We seldom select the parables as texts to preach or write upon, fearing that we may fail to give a correct explanation. We have sometimes read the explanations of them as given by others, and have been often reminded of the words of Elder John Leland, who said, in substance, "If it was as easy for him to give a clear and faultless interpretation, as it was to discover faults and imperfections in the views of others, he might boast." Brother Parker asks if in this parable men represent the field in which the good and bad seed was sown.

Our Lord says the field is the world; that is all we are sure that we know about it. Whether he designed to be understood to speak of the whole world of mankind, including the Jews and Gentiles, or the Jewish world only, we will not presume to say; but we have understood him to be speaking of the Jewish world. That people or world, as a field, God says he had "planted a noble vine, wholly a right seed;" but it had become the degenerate plant of a strange vine. – Jer. ii. 21. If we look back to Abraham and Sarah, we can find in them the original seed of which that field was sowed; but looking forward from the days of Abraham to the end of that dispensation, we find the wheat and tares growing together, in such manner that the carnal Israelites could not be destroyed without rooting up the wheat also. Many among them who may be regarded as wheat, prophets and saints, were the fleshly descendants of very depraved parents; and the good and bad were suffered to grow together until the time of harvest, when the Son of man should send forth his angels and make the separation, binding the tares in bundles, and gathering the wheat into the barn, or gospel kingdom.

In this field the wheat, or good seed, are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one, and the enemy that sowed them is the devil. This parable, if we rightly understand it, does not discriminate between the fleshly nature of the Israelites, for they were in that nature precisely alike; and those who are represented as the wheat were by nature children of wrath, even as others. It was not in their fleshly nature, origin or natural generation that they were represented by the parable of wheat and tares; but as the children of God, or of the spiritual kingdom of God, which no man can see except he be born again, born of God, of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The apostle has informed us that "they are not all Israel [wheat] which are of Israel: neither because

they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children [of the kingdom, compared to wheat]: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called." That is, as children of the promise, not of the flesh. "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." – Rom. ix. 6-8. In the parable, Jesus says, "The good seed are the children of the kingdom;" and Paul says the children of the flesh are not the children of God, or the good seed, which is sown by the Son of man.

"But the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil." Jesus said to the carnal Jews who sought to kill him, "I know that ye are Abraham's seed." But while he recognized them as the seed of Abraham after the flesh, he knew them also to be children of their father the devil, and so declared in the most positive manner. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it." – John viii. 37, 44.

These scriptures, we think, very clearly show both negatively and affirmatively what the wheat and tares do not and what they do mean. It is quite evident to us that all the fleshly offspring of Abraham were in their fleshly nature alike; and the distinction intended to be symbolized by the good and evil seeds in the parable was in reference to the spirit developed by those who are the children of the kingdom of God on the one hand, and those who developed the spirit of the wicked one on the other. All children possess and manifest the nature of their parents; and as in the animal, so in the vegetable parts of the creation, every herb, plant or tree yielding fruit contained seed in itself for the propagation of its own kind; and while all the people of Israel, yea, and all mankind, are of the same nature and origin in their fleshly

being, they are manifested as children of distinct parentage as to the spirit developed by them severally. All who are born of the spirit of God are manifestly the children of God, and children of the spiritual kingdom of God. “For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” Romans viii. 14. And God’s spirit bears witness with their spirit that they are the children of God. – Verse 16. These are the production of the good and incorruptible seed sown by the Son of man, and are children of the kingdom; while others, who were equally children of Abraham after the flesh, or by a fleshly birth, who were led by the spirit of Satan, possessing his spirit of opposition to God, are made manifest as his children by their works. He was a murderer, and they were possessed of a murderous spirit. He is a liar, and the father of lies, and there is no truth in him; and the same spirit of murder and falsehood was manifested by them. The wicked spirit which they possessed was born in them and developed by them, demonstrating its emanation from him as their father, so far as related to the murderous and lying spirit evinced by them. Thus, as the good seed sown by the Son of man was a spiritual, immortal and incorruptible seed, by which the children of the kingdom of God are born; so the tares, which were sown by the enemy, is the spirit of iniquity, sown by the devil while men slept, or while as men they were unconscious of their real state, knowing not what manner of spirit they were of.

It was not from lack of knowledge on the part of God that the tares were growing, nor lack of power to exterminate them that God allowed the wheat and tares to grow together until the harvest; but for the preservation of the wheat, lest in destroying the tares, the wheat or some of it should be rooted up. The time of growing together extended to the end of the Jewish world, then came the harvest; then came the owner of the whole field, whose fan was in his hand, who said to his disciples, “Say not ye, There are yet four months,

and then cometh harvest. Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." – John iv. 35. His coming to make the separation between the wheat and the tares is called the end of the world, meaning, as we presume, the end of the old, legal or Jewish dispensation. "But now once in the end of the world hath he [Christ] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." – Heb. ix. 26. Jesus said, "And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom [tares, who were Abraham's seed according to the flesh] shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." – Matt. viii. 11,12; Luke xiii. 25-30.

Neither our creation in the earthly Adam, nor our descent from him by natural generation, can distinguish us as children of God, or as children of the devil; both these relations are spiritual. God's children are in his appointed time born of his spirit, of incorruptible seed, and they shall serve him, and be accounted to the Lord for a generation. "They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." – Psa. xxii. 30,31. "Thus saith the Lord, As the new win is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants' sakes, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountings: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there." – Isa. lxv. 8,9. This seed existed in Christ from of old, from everlasting; were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and according to that choice were blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him, according to the purpose and grace of God, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began; therefore are they called, "A chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar

people," chosen from the beginning unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. God is the Father of our spirits, if we are his children, and Satan is the father of that murderous, lying spirit by which his children are known as a generation of vipers, and a seed of evil does; so it is the Spirit of which we are born, and not our fleshly nature which is born of the flesh, that distinguishes the children of the wicked one from the children of the living God.

In answer to the other question, there can be no doubt that our Savior was correct in his words recorded John xvii. 6, and in every word which was ever spoken by him. The men unto whom he had manifested the name of the Father were most indisputably men whom his Father had given him out of the world. His words are too explicit and definite to admit of any other construction; for he adds, "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me." And in John x. 29 he says, "My Father which gave them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." We do not for a moment admit that any argument would be in place on our part to prove that his words are always faithful and true; and while we accept his positive declaration that his people were given him of the Father out of the world, we also accept as equally true the declaration of the inspired apostle, that God, the exceeding greatness of whose power raised up Christ's crucified body from the dead, has given him to be the head over all to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. – Eph. i. 19-23. How sweetly sang the spouse, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." – Song. ii. 16. What an unspeakable gifts is Christ to his church! No language at our command can express its immensity. Given to be our Savior, our Prophet Priest and King, our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, our Advocate with the Father, our Husband, Shepherd, and our salvation. It is true, no blood of sinful

mortals could have met the demands of the law which we have transgressed, or could wash from our pollutions; but he is not only given to be the propitiation for our sins, but to be the life of all our delights and spiritual comfort for time and for eternity.

We have given such views as we have on the questions submitted, and leave brother Parker and all who read them to compare them with the divine standard of truth, and accept them only so far as they are sustained by the word and spirit of God.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y.

Signs of the Times
Volume 48, No. 8
April 15, 1880

MATTHEW 16:26; II THESSALONIANS 1:10.

Largie, Elgin Co.,
Providence of Ontario
October 28, 1868.

Dear Elder Beebe: - As I have never requested your views on any portion of scripture, you can greatly oblige me by giving your views through the "Signs of the Times" on Matthew 16:26 and also on II Thessalonians 1:10. Hoping you will comply with the above request, I remain,

Yours respectfully,
John A. Leitch.

Reply: – The interrogatory in the first named passage was used to impress the minds of the disciples most solenmly with a sense of the importance of adhering strictly to the instructions contained in the context. They were uttered by our Lord on a most solemn occasion. He had warned them to beware of the *leaven* (or doctrine) of the Pharisees and of the Saducees. He had also informed them that their knowledge of him as the Christ, the Son of the Living God, was a revelation immediately from God the Father, of what could never be revealed by man. And also that this immediate inspiration, as the keys of the kingdom, alone can open or reveal the glory of that kingdom to any of the sons of men. "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." At this intelligence Peter began to rebuke him, and say that this should not be. But our Savior charged him with savoring the things that be of men, and not the things which be of God, and thereby he was

an *offense* unto him; or as that word is used to signify a *temptation* unto him. He appealed to his passions with suggestions of human policy to avert the dreadful sufferings which were ordained of God, and on which depended the redemption of his people. “Then said Jesus unto his disciples.” On this most appropriate occasion in which Peter had proposed self indulgence instead of self denial. “If any man will come after me.” Let him mark well the self denying way which must be pursued: He came not from heaven to do his own will, or seek for personal exemption from bitter sufferings. As though he had said, Behold the sufferings which I must endure, the racking cross on which I am about to suffer, the terrible death I am about to die, the cup which I must drain, the baptism wherewith I am to be baptized, and learn in this an example of self denial and of cross bearing. When at his agonizing torture the heavens should be darkened, the rocks rent, and all nature convulsed; and then say, Who is he that will follow the suffering Lamb of God? Who will follow him beyond the gates of the city? Who will follow him without the camp, bearing his reproach? Are there any to be found to follow him in the fellowship of his sufferings? Let all such know, this is the test. “Let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.” As Jesus led the way, took up his ponderous cross, and denied himself, he marked the way with suffering and blood, in which his followers must walk, if they would follow him.

“For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.” Mark well the illustration of this saying in the pattern. Had Jesus listened to the offense, or temptation of Peter, and sought to save his life, or to avoid the cross, the agony and death, he must have failed to accomplish our salvation. All, all would have been lost; forever lost. But he laid down his life that he might take it again. Blessed example! May God work in our hearts both to will and to do his good pleasure. His followers cannot

be a self-indulging people. “Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:27).” Whosoever of the children of God will shun the cross of Christ, avoid reproach and persecution for Christ’s sake, shall lose his life; that is, as we understand it, the life and enjoyment of spiritual things, according to Romans 8:5-14. “For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” To deny ourselves is to mortify the deeds of the body; and the body is dead, because of sin; and while we are at home in the body, we are absent from Christ who is our life. Take the illustration of the context, for example. When the time of trial, persecution or suffering for Jesus’ sake comes, like Peter, resolve that it should not be borne; seek to prevent it either by drawing a sword to fight it off, or by cowering before the damsel, and denying that we know the blessed Savior. In either case, we fail to secure our object. But when, like Paul, we die daily, and count not our own life or personal comfort dear unto ourselves, and are killed all the day long, and accounted as sheep for the slaughter, then we find our life, our peace, and our divinest comforts.

We come now to the words on which our friend desires our views. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” Consider the question either in a temporal or spiritual application. Suppose any man could succeed in gaining all the world, and in coming into possession of it should have to immediately die and leave it; what has he gained, or rather what would it profit him? He cannot take it with him; he must leave it like the rich fool in the parable, to whom it was said, “Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” The soul as here used, means the life, or vitality. If a man has gained an undisputed title to the whole world, and ghastly death comes to cut him down, with what part of the whole world will he compromise with

death? Should he offer it all, can death be bribed? Will death relent? Or can he carry any part of what he has gained with him to the world to which he is hurried away? Surely he cannot. Then he is profited nothing.

Now let us apply this figure where our Lord applied it - to his disciples. What will they be profited should they seek to avoid the cross of Christ, to escape persecution, or to hoard up the treasures of this world at the expense of their spiritual privileges? Alas! How many of them have tried the fearful experiment of selling their birthright privileges in the house of God, or in the enjoyment of their most sacred comforts in spiritual things, for worldly honors, fame, or wealth; or who to gratify present lustings or carnal gratifications would forego the pleasures of the Savior’s smiles, and for a mess of pottage barter away their birthright in the kingdom and patience of our Lord.

The application of our subject opens before us. The closing verses of the chapter give special force to our application of the text to Christians who transgress the laws of Christ, either to avoid persecution, losses or crosses, or to gain treasures of earth or carnal gratifications. “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels.” When? Shall we say after the destruction of this material world, as the popular doctrine is? No; for Jesus said there were some standing there in the assembly before him who should not taste of death till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. The coming of which he spake was when he should arise from the dead and ascend his Mediatorial throne, and preside in all his Father’s glory, power and Godhead, over his kingdom which was at that time about to be set up in its gospel organization, when his holy angels, the apostles, should sit on twelve thrones, and all his ministers should be with him. When he would judge his

people, and award to every one of them according to their works.

Let then this lesson of profit and loss be duly pondered by all the children of our God; in regard to savoring the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. We may begin our application with the newborn child of God. How frequently his savoring of things which are of men, carnal reasoning, or self indulgence, incline him to live in disobedience to the Savior's great command to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. How many plausible reasons he will frame as excuses. One is inclined to wait for brighter evidences of a saving change; and continues to wait for the depravity of his old carnal nature to die out. He doesn't want to profess to be a Christian until he is sure he will be a very good one. He will disobey the command of his Lord, and perhaps may flatter himself that he is not savoring the things which be of men, while he is in reality substituting his own carnal wisdom and prudence in place of the wisdom of God. What a plea! Don't love Jesus enough to obey him, and yet waiting and hoping to grow better, and more worthy. Another is deterred from fear of more persecution or opposition than he feels able to bear. We have known some who have from some reason or another lived, or rather continued to disobey for many years. If we ask them concerning loss and profit, they have to confess they have lost the sweet privilege of communion and fellowship with the saints, but have gained nothing. They find themselves no better, no more worthy, and perhaps at last have to come out under the rod. The same carnal reasoning which savors not the things that be of God is not only betrayed in the young converts, but is often discovered in those of riper age. Its tendency always is to disobey the command of Christ in which he enjoins on all who love him to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and to rely with implicit confidence on his gracious promise to supply all things else that we need.

Instead of this, our fleshly wisdom inclines us to seek first for what we shall eat, drink, or be clothed, and first make provisions for earthly ease, comfort and convenience, and when our obedience to Christ will not require any sacrifice of carnal enjoyments, attend to the things of the kingdom. Self denial and cross bearing are involved in the pursuit of the things that be of God. But self indulgence and the gratification of carnal desires are present with us to oppose our obedience to the law of Christ. How lamentable to see the house of prayer forsaken by those who profess to be the followers of the cross-bearing Savior. Do we enquire of them the reason of their absence from the assemblies of the saints, we are told by some they have toiled so hard through the week to provide for their worldly gratification, they must indulge in rest, in order to so recuperate their physical powers that with renewed vigor they may resume their worldly pursuits and accumulate more treasures of the earth. Others have not found it convenient to attend, visitors have called, and it would not be considered polite to leave them. Or perhaps the weather is such that they cannot attend and fill their place without self denial. The law of Christ requires that we who know and love him shall hold all that we are, and all we possess as stewards in trust, considering that we are not our own, but bought with a price, and that all we possess should be subject to his orders. But when we have set our hearts on earthly gains, and idolize the mammon of this world, how self denying it is for us to impart of our abundance to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and look after the comfort of the widows and the fatherless, or to bear our part in meeting the pecuniary expenses of the church. But human prudence pleads the cause of the covetous delinquents thus: It is necessary to be close, saving, and penurious, or we will have to curtail our own extravagance, and make a less show; or if we are not very close, we shall come to want; in short, seeking to save our lives requires that we shall reverse the mandate from the throne of Zion,

and make it read, Seek first what ye shall eat and drink, and wherewith to be clothed, and secure a competency, so that you will not have to trust in God to provide for your temporal wants, and after you have laid up all you desire for this world, then attend to the things of the kingdom. In this perversion of the laws of Christ, how about profit and loss? You have gained the world, and have become a slave to it; but your poor, lean, starving soul is perishing for the consolations of the gospel, and with all the treasures of earth which you have accumulated you cannot procure the exchange for it one ray of spiritual light, or one drop of spiritual consolation. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith (Galatians 6:7-10)." "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above; not on things on the earth. For ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth (Colossians 3:1-5)."

There is yet another sense in which the disciples may seek to save their lives, and which to their sorrow they have found to be profitless. Yielding to the fear of persecution. We are informed that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (II Timothy 3:12)." Our carnal nature shrinks from persecution, and our vain ambition aspires after the applause of the world, rather than its censures. We naturally dread to have our names cast out as evil, and that dread has too often ensnared some of the timid ones. To follow Jesus, they find they must associate with his poor

despised followers, bear reproach and suffer mortification and shame. Near and dear friends and kindred in the flesh despise the company of those in whom we see the image of our Lord; but the trial comes, and can we break loose from all these earthly ties, forsake father and mother, brothers and sisters, wife, husband, or children, house and home? Will not some other way do? Can we not compromise this matter so as to save our lives in regard to the trial? As surely as we are the children of God, in doing so we shall lose what we are seeking to gain. The Lord himself has spoken it. Our only safety is to follow Jesus through evil as well as through good report, and obey his voice in all things.

"He will restore what we resign,
Or grant us blessings more divine."

The admonition of our subject commends itself to all the children of God; to the public ministers of the gospel, they are not to shun to declare all the counsel of God, from any fear of consequences, but strictly obey Christ, and leave all the consequences with him. Exhorters should wait faithfully on exhortation; and each in his calling use the gifts which God has given, and speak as with the ability which he has given, and bear in mind that there is nothing we can possibly gain by shunning the dear Redeemer's cross, or seeking self indulgence that can possibly be profitable to us, or yield us any spiritual consolation or benefit. "If ye love me," says Jesus, "keep my commandments."

We will now pass to the consideration of the text in II Thessalonians 1:10, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day."

We do not know on what part of this text our brother is perplexed, but we presume it is his desire to know what are our views in regard to the advent, or coming of our Lord, in the particular sense in which it is spoken of in this text, and its immediate connections. As the apostle speaks in his first epistle, prospectively of a day of the Lord, in which the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God, when the dead in Christ shall rise first, and then we that shall at that time be living on the earth shall be changed from natural to spiritual, from mortal to immortal, in the twinkling of an eye, and be caught up together with them in the clouds, and meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord. And yet in this text he speaks of the testimony of the apostles having been believed already among them. But if we observe the parenthesis in our text, it will relieve us from what would otherwise seem quite obscure. The text will admit of the following rendering, according to the accepted rules of our language: When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired, in that day, namely, that day when he shall come, he shall be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe: (for our testimony among you was believed). The testimony of Paul, and Timotheus, as contained in the first epistle, first chapter, and tenth verse, also in the fourth chapter, from the thirteenth verse to the end: this testimony was believed by the saints at Thessalonica, and now in the text under consideration, with its connection, is alluded to. But in the prospective day Christ will not only be revealed in his glory, and be admired by his saints, but he will also be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. And all this shall be accomplished at the very time embraced in the testimony which they had already heard and believed. In the time testified of, “When he shall come to be

glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe, in that day." It is highly probable that the testimony in the first epistle concerning that particular day had been misinterpreted by some, and in a manner which had occasioned trouble to some others; therefore the apostle, in this second epistle, relieves their minds on the subject, and beseeches them by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that they should not be soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by the letters from him, or them, by inferring from what he or they had written, that the day alluded to was near at hand; for it could not come prematurely, or until a full development and revelation should be made of that man of sin, the son of perdition, which was to be destroyed simultaneously with the exaltation of the saints at the time of this particular advent of our Savior. "And now," says he, "ye know what withholdeth, that he [the man of sin] might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming," etc.

This explanation of the apostle was eminently calculated to allay the fears of the brethren, and to protect them from those panic venders who were troubling them with appeals to their passions in regard to the coming of the day of the Lord.

Before we close this article, we wish to express a few thoughts on the subject of the several advents of our Redeemer, as set forth in the sacred record. First, when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. When he was made of a woman, made under the law to redeem his people. In that he came to be humbled, to take on him our infirmities, to bear our sins, to carry our sorrows, and to suffer the chastisement of our peace, to bear a cross, and to

be reviled of men, to be a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, to be despised of men, and in the weakness of that nature which he took on him to know the feelings of our infirmities, to humble himself and learn obedience, even unto death, to suffer, bleed and die upon the cross, to be put to death in the flesh, buried in the earth, and rise from the dead on the third day. Here was an astonishing display of the love of God. He spared not his own and only begotten Son, but delivered him up to die, the just for the unjust, to be made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. To accomplish all this, he bowed his heavens and came down to our guilty world to do and suffer all that was written of him in the law, and in the prophets, and in the psalms. And having accomplished all that the Father gave him to do, he ascended up where he was before, and a cloud received him out of the sight of his disciples.

Again he came down on the day of Pentecost; not in a body of flesh; for though we have known him after the flesh, yet henceforth know we him no more. But according to his promise, “If I go away I will come again.” “I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” Faithful and true is his word of promise, he came to them in the descent of his spirit on the day of Pentecost, organized his kingdom in her gospel order, and took his seat upon his Mediatorial throne, as the child born, the Son given, whose name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace, bearing the government upon his shoulder, inaugurated upon the throne of his father David, to order and establish his kingdom with judgment and justice, from henceforth even forever, giving assurance that “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”

In another sense still, he comes in the quickening and manifestation of his saving power and grace, to every one of his dear children; and he comes to them when all their toils and pains are fulfilled, to bear their ransomed spirits home to their eternal inheritance in the heavens.

In the ministry of his everlasting gospel, “Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him.” He is seen by his saints in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, riding on the wings of the wind, and making the bright clouds of his witnesses his chariots. He comes to avenge his saints, and to destroy their enemies; and lo! He comes to abide with them forever, to dwell in them, and to walk in them. But in the theme of the apostle, to which our attention is called by our brother, he comes in most transcendent power and indescribable glory, when he shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know him not, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe, in that day.

Once, as we have seen, he came to bear a cross, but now he comes to wear a crown of dazzling splendor. Once he came to be humbled, to bear shame and reproach; but now in all the radiant glory of the Father, and all his mighty angels. Once he came forth weeping, and bearing precious seed; but now to harvest his sheaves and bear them in triumph to the highest heavens.

Middletown, N.Y.
November 15, 1868.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 290 -299

MATTHEW XVII. 5.

“WHILE he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

Various indeed, grand and sublime beyond description, have been the manifestations of Jesus to his disciples; and perhaps none of them have been more glorious than the one now under consideration. In the preceding chapter the Redeemer had been warning his disciples of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and had therein revealed to Peter something of the nature of his kingdom here upon the earth. He then gave them some instructions relative to his death, and resurrection from the dead. And it is quite evident from the answer of Peter to him, that he was as yet in great ignorance of the true nature of the mission of Jesus into the world. The Lord was not pleased to let in the full blaze of the light of the knowledge of his glory upon the minds of his disciples at once, for they were not yet able to bear it. But he manifested the light in proportion as he strengthened and prepared their minds to receive it, and thus step by step he led them on from glory to glory, in the knowledge of himself as the Son of God, and Redeemer of the church. And when he had told them that he must be killed and raised again from the dead, Peter began to rebuke him; for which rebuke the Savior reproved him sharply. Shortly after this Jesus took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain apart, when this most grand and enrapturing scene described in the text occurred. We read that Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. It was at this juncture that Peter proposed building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. “While he yet spake, behold, a

bright cloud overshadowed them." Whatever this cloud was in itself, we believe we are correct in saying it was the symbol of the presence of the glory of the eternal Jehovah. The Redeemer had on different occasions manifested himself in the cloud, and in a way that those to whom the manifestation was made, were made to know that God was with them. When God blessed Noah, and established his covenant with him, that he would no more cut off all flesh with the waters of a flood, the cloud was his chosen emblem, in which he set his bow, the token of that covenant. The declaration was, and "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of the covenant between me and the earth." And I will look upon it, and remember my covenant for perpetual generations. The covenant was made with all the earth, and the token is that which all the earth can see. And all the ages which have passed and gone, the rising and falling of Empires, with all the various and changing seasons and scenes, which have existed from that time until the present, have not removed the token, nor annulled the decree, and by it we are still assured that all flesh shall not any more be cut off with the waters of a flood, and to this day the token is seen, and through its soft and beautiful hues it is yet proclaiming to men the immutability, mercy and faithfulness, of the covenant and unchanging God. If we pursue this cloud a little farther, we will find it the emblem of another bright, merciful and luminous manifestation from the God of grace and glory. - We refer in this instance, to the cloud that attended the Israelites in their journeyings from Egypt to Canaan. And by it God led Joseph like a flock, and Israel by the right way, that he might go to a city of habitation. But the question naturally arises, How did he lead them? Is God a man, that he should take Israel by the hand literally, and lead them forth? What shall be their unerring guide, and their unfailing protection through the wilderness, and over that trackless path with which they are altogether unacquainted, and which alone leads to their land of promise? Will God do

anything more than to command them to the land of promise? Will he not leave them to guess at the way, and search it out for themselves, and leave them subject to the misfortune of missing the right way, dependent upon circumstances, and the direction of mortals? By no means; God led them. But how did he lead them? The language of the inspired writer is more full and clear upon this point, than any other can be. - “And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night he took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.” From the foregoing Scripture, we cannot fail to discover that Israel were led by the Lord their God. They were not only led by the cloud (the emblem of God’s presence, power and glory,) but it was also a protection to them from their enemies. When they were pursued by their enemies, this cloud stood between the two companies, and the Egyptians could not have reached the Israelites until they passed through the pillar of cloud, and thus we see them completely protected from the wrath of Egypt’s king. This cloud, called the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them, and came between the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel, and while it was a cloud and darkness to them, it gave light to Israel. None, methinks, can fail to discover the fullness of the blessing of this cloud, for it was the leader and protector of Israel; the presence of their God with them, manifesting these mercies which could come from no other source. When God commanded Moses to make a tabernacle, he commanded him to make all things according to the pattern presented to him on the mount. The tabernacle was to accompany the Israelites in their journeyings through the wilderness, and on the day it was reared up, the cloud covered it, namely, the tent of the testimony; and at even

there was upon the tabernacle, as it were, the appearance of fire, until morning. So it was always, the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then the children of Israel journeyed onward, and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. From the foregoing we cannot fail to see the wisdom and sovereignty of God, in leading his chosen people into the promised land of their inheritance, and they could not lose their way, for God was with them in the cloud as their leader; neither could the enemy destroy them, for the Lord was their protection, and very present help in every time of need. The cloud bade them to march onward, and it commanded them to rest, and whither it moved they went; when it rested, they rested, and it then passed around and stood between the two camps. But these manifestations to national Israel, were but feeble glimmerings of the revelation of the glory of God in his church in the gospel. They were but the shadow of things to come; the body or substance of which is Christ. Our Lord said to his disciples, “Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.” The legal ministration of the law was but a shadow, and all its glory was borrowed, as the light and glory of the moon are borrowed from the sun. And we are informed that the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, (which hope is Christ.) There was never a law given which could give life; the vail was over the law, and there was no looking upon it with open face. But in the gospel the apostle says, “We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Here then, the superlative glory, the substance, that better thing, which God hath provided for us in the gospel, is revealed, and was

declared out of that bright cloud which overshadowed the disciples at the transfiguration. But why did the cloud appear at this time, and at the ascension of our Lord to glory, and appear no more? To this, it may be answered, that Jesus was a minister of the circumcism, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers, and the types and shadows must remain until Jesus is glorified, and the substance comes in all its perfection, and swallows up all these things in its transcendent glory. When the cloud covered the tent of the congregation of Israel, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses could not enter into the tent of the congregation. And there is certainly no room for the law of Moses, or a conditional covenant, in the gospel of Christ. There can be no room for the ministration of condemnation and death, in the ministration of life; for it is covered and filled with Christ, its living glory, its life, its all and in all. But it is said that this cloud is taken up, and has not been seen in that peculiar form and manner, in which it appeared to Israel, since the ascension of our Lord. And what is now to be the guide and protection of the church, and how are we to know what has the seal and authority of heaven, and what has not? How are we to know who the people of God are, that are walking in gospel truth and order, and what is the infallible rule by which we may distinguish them from those who are walking after the traditions and commandments of men? All claim to be right, but opposite directions and jargons assure us that some are wrong. And it is truly an important inquiry, how shall we distinguish between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not? The text affords us the infallible rule. That cloud prefigured Christ as its substance, and the last words heard out of it were uttered by the eternal God, and were, “This is my beloved Son; hear ye him.” The cloud will no more guide the wandering Israelites, for the gospel kingdom is now to be set up, and Christ is King and Lawgiver therein; and he shall tell his subjects, not through the movable emblem of the vaporing cloud, but with

his own words, what the commands of the gospel are, and wherein they shall walk. Moses and Elias talked together with Christ at the transfiguration, but Moses and Elias are now lost sight of, and swallowed up in Christ.

The Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations bore testimony to Christ, but now he has come, the testimony is swallowed up in Christ, the substance. The prophets foretold his coming in the flesh, and now he has come and fulfilled all that was written of him, and here all types, shadows and prophecies, have come to an end. The law and the prophets were until John, but now the kingdom of heaven is preached, and Jesus himself declared, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him. Hence we are not to take the law of Moses for our guide. The law of Moses has no power over a gospel subject, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every believer. Yet we are not without law to Christ; and in relation to this, the apostle said, “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” But to return to the language, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” We cannot receive the idea, that God has any sons with whom he is not well pleased, or that there is any sonship out of Christ. But here, Christ the Mediator, (and the children of God were never without an elder brother and mediator,) is spoken of particularly. The prophet Isaiah spake of Christ, in his mediatorial character, as the cloud by day, the shining of a flaming fire by night, and the defense upon all the glory of Zion. He also spake of him as the Son and Lawgiver, and the one upon whose shoulder the government should rest. God also declared that he gave him, a commander and leader to Israel. Now, if the government is upon his shoulder, and he is the commander and leader, it certainly can be nothing short of idolatry to follow in any other way, or establish anything as religious institutions which he has not commanded. The

eternal God declared himself well pleased in Christ as Mediator, Savior and Redeemer of the church, and he is well pleased also with his children in him, for they are all accepted together in the beloved, and it is Jesus whom they acknowledge as their only Lawgiver, Lord and Christ. Agreeable with this is the commission itself. In this the disciples are to teach all nations (or the saints among all nations,) to observe all things which Christ has commanded them, and they have nothing to do with Moses, for he is dead. The Lord buried him, and even his sepulchre is nowhere to be found in the gospel. When we listen to the command, "Hear ye him," (my Son) we are as gospel subjects to listen to, and obey God rather than men, and look to Christ, and turn away from Moses. And where can we find where Christ ever commanded a subject in the gospel to keep the law of Moses, and obey the conditions of the old covenant, as a means of salvation, or as having anything to do with the children of grace, under the gospel dispensation? Did he ever tell any one that he had fulfilled a part of the law, and that the balance was to be complied with by man? Never. But he did declare that heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should pass until all was fulfilled. He came to fulfill the law and the prophets; to pay all the requirements of the law; to die under its curse, and to redeem therefrom the bone of his bone, and the flesh of his flesh, and he was straitened until he had accomplished it. He bore the curse of the law for his brethren, and delivered them from that curse; he having been made a curse for them. Many people suppose that they have much to do to help Christ along in the great business of salvation. But all such have yet to learn the beauty and force of that saying, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." In the glorious plan of salvation, Christ does everything, and the church receives all things, and this excludes boasting, exhibits grace, exalts the Redeemer, and glorifies God. And

all the commands of Christ are to the children of his kingdom. And these commands are simply to follow him. And how unlike they are to the commands of men. The subject is most beautifully illustrated in Acts XV. There were certain men which came down from Judea, which believed, and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when the apostles had assembled, there rose up certain of the pharisees which believed, saying that it was necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And these pharisees were believers. In what did they believe? Just what Arminians believe in now, and what they preach and contend for: that it is necessary for man to do something; which something will amount to an obedience which God will accept as conditions of his salvation. But what said that judge in Israel, even the one to whom Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven? Peter said unto them, Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon their necks which neither we, nor our fathers, were able to bear? Peter had received no authority from Christ to command the disciples among the Gentiles to observe these things. But what commandment had he received? We must now most certainly look for him to act in strict accordance with the authority and command given him by his Master. The apostles considered the matter, and sent a message to those brethren, whose hearts had been made sad by these false teachers. And it is still the duty of all the servants of Christ to lift their voice against every species of error, and present to their brethren the glorious consolations of the gospel. This consolation is found in the message already referred to, and which we will here transcribe, and will remark that the effect produced was the same that all gospel messages will invariably produce upon the entire household of faith. After the apostles had prefaced their message with a solemn declaration that they had given those judaizing teachers no commandment to lay this conditional system upon the disciples, they say, “For it

seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden that these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well." And when the epistle had been read, they rejoiced for the consolation. The gospel of Christ is a message of consolation to the brethren at all times, and under all circumstances. It proclaims to them the fullness of their redemption, and the glory of that liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. And all the commands of the gospel require nothing more nor less, than for its subjects to follow Christ, in the ordinances of it, through evil, as well as good report. They call upon none in heaven, or earth, to devise ways, make laws, or institute means for the salvation of men, or the furtherance of the glory of God. The eternal Father hath given Christ, a commander and leader to the people, and it is his to command, and theirs to obey. And in this obedience they are not to lead, but are to follow Christ. And he has said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." They have nothing to do with Moses. They left him on the Pisgah of the law, and were led by Jesus into the Canaan of the gospel, and to him they are to look, and from him they receive all the commands which they are to obey; and in all this obedience they show forth his praise, and acknowledge him as their Redeemer and Commander, and the Captain of their salvation. They know no other commander, they have no other leader; they acknowledge him alone as King in Zion, and it is he that they obey as the only Lawgiver in Israel. Let us then run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Middletown, N. Y.
Sept. 15, 1854.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 128 - 136

MATTHEW 18

Brother Beebe: Will you please give your views on the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, particularly on the subject of church discipline? Can a member of the church be lawfully excluded, except it be done according to the rule laid down in that chapter? Some think it unnecessary to take labor in all cases, especially cases where the offence is committed in the presence of the church. Your views on the subject will be kindly received.

Yours, with esteem,
C. B. Fuller. Roxbury, N.Y.,
January 17, 1862.

REPLY: We do not feel competent to explain all the questions which may be suggested upon the subject of church discipline, still it appears to us that the subject is very clearly laid down in the New Testament. We have observed in our fifty years membership in the church of Christ, that as a general thing the greatest discrepancy in opinion in regard to the laws of Christ have been where churches have been least inclined to be governed by the word and Spirit of our divine Lord and Master. We do not feel sure that what is said by our Lord on the subject in this chapter (Matthew 18) was designed to embrace all cases of discipline that should ever occur, but rather to cover the ground embraced in the subject on which our Lord was at that time instructing his disciples, for we find other portions of the New Testament devoted to an extended view of the same subject, and particularizing many cases in which individual christians and whole churches are required to act in obedience to the laws of Christ. Still, it seems to us that no action of a church or of a member of the church can be valid where the general instructions of this chapter are not observed and practiced.

The time and circumstances attending this instruction show that an unbecoming ambition to excel each other was betrayed by at least some of the disciples, and to settle the matter they brought the subject to Jesus, and put the question in undisguised terms to him, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This kind of ambition lies generally at the bottom of most, if not all, the dissensions which divide churches, and individual saints, and is prolific in the production of disaffection and alienation; and as that ambitious fiend is still alive, and sometimes harbored in the breasts of christians, it will be well for us all to observe carefully the instructions given in this case. Jesus set a little child in the midst of them. What an example! What a volume of much needed instruction is here! "And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And who shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged around his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Here are the primary instructions in regard to discipline. Deep humility is the very first requisite, and it is indispensable as a qualification to transact the business of Christ's kingdom. Without this childlike spirit the gates of the kingdom are barred against us. The profession of this meek and humble spirit is a passport to the kingdom, and such an humble little child that believes in Christ cannot be rejected or excluded without rejecting and excluding Christ himself. How fearful, too, to offend one of those little ones who believe in Jesus. The term here rendered, *offend,* has a broader signification than merely to ruffle the feelings, or excite the resentment. We understand it to be in the sense

that Peter was on one occasion an offense to Jesus; that is, when he savored the things which be of men, and not the things which be of God. To offend may be understood to mean to lay a stumbling block in their way; to deprive them of their sacred rights in the house of God; to grieve their childlike spirit by unbrotherly conduct, or to overturn their faith, as did Philetus and Hymeneus the faith of some. The church as a body, and every member should be solemnly impressed with the weight of these instructions, or they cannot be competent to administer the discipline of the church of the living God. Beware then, brethren, how you attempt to meddle with the discipline of the church if actuated or even influenced by a haughty spirit that would strive for the mastery. We answer, therefore, one of brother Fuller's questions. No member of the church can be lawfully excluded from the church without a strict conformity of this rule. Where the supremacy of this rule enjoining a childlike humility on each acting member of the church is not regarded, it were better that they were drowned in the sea, than under any other rule to expel from the privileges of the church of God one of his humblest disciples. Where this rule is observed, and the church is solemnly impressed with a sense of their responsibility, they feel that to expel from communion any who should be retained in fellowship, is to reject the Lord Jesus; there will be no room for thrusting the side and shoulder, but an ardent desire to restore the erring in the spirit of meekness, and in the bowels of Christ.

This consideration is enforced on our minds by a beautiful illustration in the same connection: "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, He rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in

heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." A brother who has given us the evidence that he has been converted and become as a little child has been accordingly received into fellowship, but subsequently he is overtaken in a fault. Shall he at once be killed? Shall he be rudely thrust out? No, "Ye which are spiritual restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Gal. 6:1,2) Go in the spirit of humility into the mountain and search diligently for the strayed sheep, remember that it is the will of your heavenly Father that he shall not perish. You cannot fulfill the law of Christ if you do not desire his restoration to the fold, and after all your toil and labor in searching the mountain, if you succeed in reclaiming the wanderer, if you possess the Spirit of Christ, it will afford you more joy to see him reclaimed and brought back to his privileges in the church, than to see all the other members, which have not strayed, in their place in the church. It is not the will of God our Father which is in heaven that he shall perish, and should it be your will to consign him to perish in the wilderness? "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Christ would not charge us to take heed if there were no liability of our doing so. Do not under rate them, they are precious in the eyes of him who came from heaven to save that which was lost; and in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. Yet, notwithstanding the full force of all this admonition, there are cases in which exclusions are unavoidable. Woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh! "Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee." "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." We are the mystical body of Christ, and members one of another. No sane man would consent to the amputation of a healthy and sound member of his body, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ does the

church. Should a hand, or foot, or any other member become diseased, bruised or painful, all the sound members would sympathize with the diseased member, and before we could consent to amputation we would exhaust all the healing medicines within our reach; but if mortification sets in, and the inflammation is actually spreading to the centre of vitality, to the heart, as a last painful and dreaded resort we apply the surgical knife. So in the church, if the hand or foot, or even the eye, however useful these members may have been, or may be deemed, as indispensable for usefulness or convenience, if the law of Christ requires us to cut them off and cast them from the body, it must be done, for it is better to enter into life halt, maimed, or with but one eye, than, retaining all these disordered and incurable members, to be cast into hell fire. That is, into confusion, in the sense in which James speaks of the tongue as an unruly member, setting on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. The discipline of the church of God must be enforced strictly according to the law of Christ, without partiality; but it must be done as well in the Spirit of Christ as in strict obedience to the letter of his precepts, for his word and his Spirit always harmonize and go together. The most essential point is to be guided by his Spirit, for that Spirit will lead us into the truth. Whenever we are led by the humble, loving, tender, forgiving Spirit of Christ, and the law of Christ and health of the church demand that we should pluck out right eyes, or cut off right hands, there will be deep lamentation and mourning, certainly not exulting, and boasting, that we have carried our points. Who ever exulted that he had lost an eye, or suffered the amputation of a hand or a foot? When we see brethren or churches exulting that they have carried their points, and procured the expulsion of any of their members, we feel confident that the law of Christ has been violated.

Brother Fuller asks our views on this chapter, and we have endeavored to state as plainly as possible what are our views on the first fourteen verses, for we do not believe any brother or any church can possibly obey the remaining part of the instructions unless they are governed by the instructions thus far considered.

We now come to the portion of the chapter to which we suppose Elder Fuller more particularly refers, in which our Lord says, “Moreover,” that is, what he is now about to say is added to what he has said, and is to be taken in the same connection; these instructions are not tobe separated, divided, garbled, nor handled deceitfully: “Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee.” Let us observe as we read, he is thy brother who has trespassed, he is still to be recognized in that relation until the whole course of discipline has been faithfully pursued; under no circumstances then is the laboring brother or the church at liberty to apply to him offensive epithets, such as heretic, drunkard, liar, thief, fox, crafty, disorderly, etc., terms which are only calculated to excite angry passions and render a reclamation more difficult, if not impossible. Although you feel certain he has trespassed against thee, still regard and treat him as a brother, and as a brother dearly beloved, whom you desire above all things to reclaim. Keeping this in view, you cannot go to any one else without trespassing against him, and becoming guilty of the same wrong which you hold against him. Nothing can more clearly violate the laws of Christ than to publish your complaints to others before you have pursued the course here enjoined. Under no pretence are you at liberty to get up a prejudice against him, by whispering, hinting, or in any way insinuating your complaint to others. The instruction is plain: “Go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” If you succeed in gaining him, no other person under heaven should ever know that he has ever trespassed against thee. How often have churches been

thrown into disorder and confusion by an aggrieved or an offended brother disregarding and disobeying this divine rule. Instead of going to the erring brother alone, how frequently nearly the whole church, and perhaps the world, become familiar with the matter before the offending brother has been visited alone. After going to A, B, and C, asking their opinion on the merits of the case, relating to them the circumstances, exciting their suspicions against the brother, under the pretence perhaps of asking their advice, it is too late to go to the offending brother alone, unless it be to confess your own wickedness in divulging the matter. The object of the private interview is thwarted by your own disobedience to the law of Christ. But supposing you have not communicated the matter to any one, now you are required to go to him. Your errand is to reclaim him in the spirit of meekness; you are not to go as a lion, but as a little child, considering your own infirmities and liability to err. And as old father Thomas used to tell us, “Mind and go alone. Try and leave the old man behind, he will be greatly in your way.” You are on the King’s business, therefore put off the old man with his affections and lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; then you will not seize the offending brother by the throat and demand immediate payment, but you will remember how much your Lord has forgiven you, and how much your brethren have to forgive you; then will ye be kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven you. If you fail to gain your brother, then take the next step, in the same kind and humble spirit, and if in this the brother cannot be reclaimed, tell it to the church. There leave it with the church, do not try to raise an unjust prejudice against the brother, but let the church carefully investigate the matter, and in the spirit and temper of the gospel make a decision. If all this be done in the manner directed, what the church shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and what she shall loose on earth

is loosed in heaven. Heaven has ratified and established this course. But it is wicked and impious to pretend to administer the discipline of the house of God in any other way, or when influenced by any other spirit. We conclude, therefore, and answer brother Fuller, that no member can be lawfully excluded from a church, except it be in conformity to this rule. But while we say this, we do not intend to be understood that private steps of labor are by this rule required in taking cognizance of offences which take place in open church meeting. A disorderly member is to be called to order by the church, when he acts disorderly in the presence of the church, as we understand this rule. But this must be done between him and the church alone. No member is at liberty to publish or even mention it out of the church; and the same childlike meekness is to be felt and exercised by the church as is required by the individual member. As we have before said, there are further instructions contained in the New Testament on the subject of discipline beside those in this chapter, but none which are not in perfect harmony with what Christ has here given. The apostles were inspired to set all these things in order, and to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It is perfectly safe then to follow their directions, and not only safe, but imperative; we cannot disregard them without involving disobedience to our King. Every instruction we can require is clearly presented by Christ and his apostles, to apply to all cases that can possibly call for the exercise of gospel discipline among the children of God. The greatest difficulties we meet arise from a lack of that childlike spirit which is enjoined by Christ in this eighteenth chapter, rather than from any lack of clearness in the law of Christ; for when christians are in that humble and spiritual frame they seldom, if ever, fail to settle all their differences; but in absence of that spirit their efforts are vain, for holiness becomes the house of the Lord forever.

The point on which we understand brother Fuller to desire us to be more definite is, whether there are any cases in which exclusion of members is lawful, where private labor in the first and second steps, according to the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, have not been formally taken. We answer, We think there are. For instance, "A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (Titus 3:10,11) An heretic is one who holds and utters heresy. The church is authorized to judge in this matter. One member shall speak in the church at a time, and the rest shall judge. That is, the church shall judge of what is said by each one, whether itbe sustained by the Scriptures and by the experience of the saints; if it be contrary to the word and spirit of truth, admonish him. The church should admonish him, and all who hear him utter heresy should admonish him, tenderly and in love; and if he heed not the admonition, admonish him again, labor to convince him of his error; but after the first and second admonition reject him, if he be not reclaimed. A man that is an heretic may be a preacher, or he may be a private member in the church, but in either case he should be first admonished faithfully twice, and then if not reclaimed, reject him. We do not suppose that each member of the church should be required to go personally and separately to tell him of his faults between the two alone. If the heresy be known only to one, then let that one take the first, and if need be, the second step of gospel labor, and then tell it to the church. But if the heresy be uttered before the whole church, then let the whole church admonish him, between her and him alone, once, and then again, and if he persists in his heresy, reject or expel him from fellowship.

Further examples may be found: I Corinthians fifth and sixth chapters. If it be known that a member be an adulterer, a fornicator, an idolater, a thief, a drunkard, a reviler, or an extortioner, or covetous, we are required to at once withdraw

all association with such; and Paul commands, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that such be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. ‘Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.” But it is to be done when the church is gathered together, “and my spirit.” Let us be sure that the Spirit of Christ, which inspired Paul to lay down this rule, is with us, pervading the whole church; and he adds, “with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.” If we have and are actuated by that Spirit that inspired Paul, we may feel an assurance that we have the power of Christ, the authoritative power of Christ, in delivering such unto Satan, or in other words, in putting such manifestly wicked persons away from among ourselves.

Finally, whenever a christian is offended or aggrieved with his fellow christian, so that his fellowship is marred, he is bound to regard it as a personal matter, and go privately and tell him his fault, between him and the offending brother alone, and labor to gain, not to destroy his brother, and pursue in the subsequent steps laid down, let the offence or trespass be what it may; and if a brother bring his gift to the altar, and there remember that his brother has aught against him, let him leave there his gift, (unoffered) before the altar, and go and first be reconciled to his brother, and then come and offer his gift. Christians and churches are sometimes too backward in attending to what they may regard as but small matters, and allow them to grow and fester until they learn, by painful experience, how great a fire a little matter kindleth. A faultfinding spirit is unbecoming our holy profession, but christian faithfulness is indispensable to the peace of the church, and as members we are required to watch over one another, to exhort and to admonish one another in love. Nor is this obligation limited to any particular branch of the church of God. Although the church is scattered in her locality, and there are many organizations, yet they

are all branches of the one church which is the body of Christ. Much is said of the independence of churches; that is, of their independence of each other, and of any ecclesiastical court above the church. This independence should be carefully considered, for although we acknowledge no pope, or bishop, no synod or association, as having a right to lord it over the churches, we must contend that the whole church is the body of Christ; all who are members of that one body are members one of another, so that the hand cannot say to the foot, "We have no need of thee. It takes every member to make the body, and all the branches of the church to constitute the bride of Christ; and although all the several branches, if on gospel ground, have equal rights, still these rights are limited, for no church has a right to do wrong. All are bound to be governed by the law of Christ, and the several branches of the church are as vitally connected to each other as the members of a particular branch are one to another. Hence the duties of the churches of the same faith and order toward each other as churches do not differ essentially in this respect from the relative duties of members in a church. To illustrate: My two feet, though members alike of my body, claim to be independent of each other; one of them resolves to travel eastwardly, the other is equally determined to go to the west, how long can they maintain their independence and pursue their respective courses without dividing the body to which they both belong? A house or a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. How can two walk together except they are agreed? To maintain fellowship and harmony among the several branches of the church of God they all should be willing to compare notes together, to communicate with each other freely, to behold each other's order, and their steadfastness in the faith. Our real fellowship demands that we should be fully satisfied that we are all led by the same Spirit, that we are pursuing the same course, that we, as one body, are of one heart and one mind; for what use has one body of more

than one heart or one mind? When churches become reckless of the esteem and fellowship of sister churches, they speak loudly of their independence, and seem to have forgotten that a haughty spirit goeth before a fall; while churches walking more cautiously in the valley of humiliation feel that they need the fellowship, the sympathy and the prayers of all their sister churches.

But as we have already extended this article to considerable length, we will submit what we have written to brother Fuller, apologizing to him at the same time for delaying so long to answer his request.

Middletown, N.Y.,
May 15, 1862.

Elder Gilbert Beebe,
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 190 - 200

MATTHEW 18:10; 13:26

Brother Beebe: - If it will not be too much trouble, please give us your views on Matthew 18:10, especially on the last clause. Also on Matthew 13:26, and oblige your unworthy brother.

Reuben D. Compton
Near Hardinsburgh, Kentucky

Reply: - The first text on which we are desired to express our views is as follows: "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 18:10) These words are spoken by our Lord Jesus Christ in solemn admonition to his disciples, warning them of the magnitude of the wickedness of offendmg any of the little ones of his kingdom. "Woe to the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come: but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" The world is hostile to the kingdom of Christ, and in it the saints must have tribulation; there is a needs be for this, and God has assured us that these things shall, with all other things, work together for good to them that love God, and who are called according to his purpose. Yet the final benefit of tribulations, offences, and opposition from the world, under the over-ruling power and providence of God to the saints, shall not shield the world, nor the men of the world, from the retributive woe pronounced on them because of offences. It were better that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. But these offences shall not only come from the *outside* world, or that portion of the children of men who make no profession of godliness, but from that worldly, earthly, sensual and devilish nature which all the saints have

to grapple with while here in the flesh. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other.” And as the apostle James reminds us, from these lusts which war against the Spirit in all the children of God while in the flesh, comes wars, and even fightings among the children of God. And if any man flatters himself that he has not these sinning lusts or hostile propensities, which war against the Spirit, in him, he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him. Therefore Paul, in his address to the Elders of Ephesus, says, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” (Acts 20:29,30). And our Redeemer himself also warned his disciples that a man’s foe should be those of his own household. In this 18th chapter of Matthew, Christ as the Head of his Church, and King of saints, has laid down his law for the government and discipline of his members, and accompanied his precepts with the most solemn warnings and admonitions, as in our text, he says to his disciples, “*Take heed.”* Their most profound attention is required, dangers stand thick, which are to be apprehended; no heedless or careless deportment will be approved. The most important consequences are involved. “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones.” The Saviour would not command them to take heed if there were no danger of their doing that which he warns them to avoid. It is true that the incorruptible spirit of life and immortality in them which is born of incorruptible seed by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, can not sin, because it is born of God, and therefore would require no warning, if it were not that those who are the subjects of this heavenly birth have also a carnal or fleshly nature which is born of the flesh, and which is of corruptible seed, and which warreth against the Spirit.

The *old man,* or carnal nature is to be put off, guarded against, and crucified with its affections and lusts, and the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness, is to be put on. It is therefore in consideration of our depraved earthly natures that Christians are the subjects of these solemn admonitions; for with their mind (having the mind of Christ) they serve the law of God, but with the flesh, the law of sin.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones. The little ones intended are those who bear the characteristics set forth by the Master in the commencement of the chapter. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven," etc. The disciples then, including the apostles, must become as little children, as an indispensable qualification to fill their position in the kingdom of heaven; and thus qualified they will assume to be but little children, - honest, simple, dependent, confiding and humble. To offend then the humble child-like disciple of the Lord Jesus was what even Christians were and are so liable to do, as to require this explicit warning from the Lord.
To *offend,* however, in this scriptural sense of the word, means to cast a stumbling block, or an impediment in their way, to mislead them, or to cause them to offend, or to do that whereby they are diverted from the pathway of holiness, or thrown out of the fellowship of the saints, or deprived of any of their spiritual privileges, or in any way to do them wrong. This being what we understand to be the admonition given to the primitive disciples, and binding on the saints now, and throughout all time, we will pass to notice the more weighty considerations by which our Lord enforced the admonition, which will bring us to the part of the text on which brother Compton more especially desired our views.

"For I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The principle difficulty with many has been to understand in what sense the word *angels* is used in this text. Many interpretations have been offered by the learned, and the curious, which we hold to be altogether speculative, and unfounded. Some brethren, whom we highly esteem, have favored the idea that each saint, while here below, has an angel commissioned from the regions of glory, to keep a vigilant watch over them, and each has his respective angel. But we know of no scripture to sustain that idea. We know that the angel of the divine presence is always with them, and the angel of the everlasting covenant has a mediatorial charge over them; but *their angels,* in our text, is in the plural number, and in the possessive case, and implies that each saint has his respective angel, which is his own angel, and in communion with, and in the immediate presence of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the scriptures the term, or name, is given to the heavenly host, as to those who came to Abraham, to Joshua, to Hagar, and others, and appeared to the shepherds on the plains of Judea to announce the birth of our Redeemer; it is also applied to the ministers of the gospel, as messengers of the Lord; it is applied also to the devil, and his angels, or spirits which are in the world. But the sense in which it is used in our text is to designate the spiritual life, or identity, of every saint. A spirit without a material body is called an angel. The Sadducees denied the resurrection of the body, and they also denied the existence of *angels, or spirits;* but the Pharisees confessed both. In this sense the term was applied to Peter, when the damsel announced to the disciples that Peter was at the gate knocking for admission, they supposing it to be impossible that Peter was personally there in body, said, "It is his angel," by which they evidently meant it was his spirit, without the material body of flesh, or in distinction from his

fleshly body, which they supposed was chained, and strongly guarded in the prison. These instances will suffice to show that the spiritual identity of the saints, in distinction from their earthly bodies, are denominated angels. So also when Christ shall come to raise up their bodies, at the last day, all his holy angels shall come with him, and their risen bodies shall meet them in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. Paul says, "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more," etc. (II Cor. 5:16) As the members of Christ's spiritual body, the saints are only known as a spiritual people; neither male, or female, Jew or Gentile, bond, or free, but they are all one in Christ Jesus. They are not identified as members of Christ by that which is born of the flesh, but by that which is born of the Spirit, and consequently, is spirit, or angel. The spiritual life of the Christian is, therefore, what we understand to be intended in our text by *their angels.* These do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. Our fleshly eyes have never seen the Father at any time, nor can the eyes of our natural understanding, by searching, find him out; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are spiritually discerned. But while the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love him, God has revealed these things to his saints by his spirit; for the spirit (or new man) searcheth all things: yea, the deep things of God. Yet he himself is judged of no man.

Understanding then that the new man, the spiritual man, the inner man, is the angel, and this angel is the life which was given us of the Father, is it not a manifest truth in the experience of all the saints that this life is hid with Christ in God, and that in him they do always behold the face of the Father - that they have fellowship with the Father, and with

his son, Jesus Christ. In heaven they do always behold the face of my Father. And certainly to see him, to behold him, is a heaven of heavens, to his saints; for in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore. God hath raised us up together with Christ, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And he hath shined in our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. For Christ is the image of the invisible God. He is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.

When we contemplate the near and vital relationship of the children to their Father, God, and their intercourse at his throne, the view they have, by faith, of his awful majesty, does it not clothe the admonition of our text with inexpressable importance? They are in communion with the eternal God, they dwell under the shadow of the Almighty, what fearful responsibilities rest on us, brethren, that we should take heed that we offend them not! "Touch not," saith he, "mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm; for he that touches them touches the apple of mine eye. Could we, as Christians, always realize how precious God's little ones are in his sight, would it not lead us to love one another with a pure heart fervently? Every act of kindness, love, sympathy, and brotherly kindness done to them, even to give to one of them a cup of water in his name, is done to Jesus. "I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; for inasmuch as ye have done it to these my disciples, ye have done it unto me." Saul was persecuting Jesus by persecuting and breathing slaughter against his disciples. They are one with him, and he makes their cause his own.

The other text, Matthew 13:26, reads, "But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." This is part of a parable which Jesus spake to his disciples; the object of which was to instruct them in regard

to his kingdom. He has not, as some have supposed, applied this parable to the peopleing of this world, but he has applied it to his kingdom, which is not of this world. In this parable he says, “The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.” This parable, we think, has a primary application to national Israel, in the type, according to Isaiah 5:1-7, but in its anti-typical design, it is peculiarly applicable to the kingdom of heaven, under the gospel dispensation. The house of Israel, as a vineyard of the Lord, was planted wholly of a right seed, but Israel became amalgamated with the heathen, and, as the degenerate fruit of a strange vine. So in the organization of the gospel church in her visible and external order and ordinances, it was planted wholly of a right seed. John the Baptist, as the harbinger sent before the face of the Messiah, and to make ready a people prepared of the Lord, when he announced that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, refused to make any ready who did not bring forth fruit meet for repentance. And when the Church was organized on the day of Pentecost, there were no tares among the wheat. They gladly received the word, and were baptized, and added to the church. And they all continued steadfastly in the apostolic doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. These all showed by their fruit that they were the production of pure seed, for they were all of one mind, and they had the mind of Christ. Another evidence of the purity of the wheat we infer from the fact that the Lord was himself the sower, and he never sows any but pure seed. The Lord, we read, added to them daily of such as should be saved. In the early days of the gospel church there was but little apparent encouragement offered to carnal men to identify themselves with the saints; for the persecution raged violently against all who professed to be disciples of Jesus. The exposure to disfranchisement, confiscation, imprisonment, cruel scourging, banishment and

death, was not palatable to ungodly men, and it hardly seemed probable in the judgment of men, that the devil would attempt to sow his tares among the Lord's wheat. Like seed in the earth before the blade springs up, the productions of the field are undeveloped. "But when it was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also." So in the progress of the gospel kingdom, in her visible order, the enemy has sown among the wheat, and this has been done while men slept. Darkness suits the workers of iniquity, their works are works of darkness, and they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. And darkness, or night, with the saints is the time when they are apt to sleep, or yield to dreams of security, unconscious of what the enemy is about. In baseless fabrications, or delusive dreams, they some times fancy the Lord is bringing in his redeemed, and they talk of great revivals. New instrumentalities are found to be amazingly successful in bringing converts into a religious profession, the church grows as with the corpulency of dropsy, and while men sleep, they dream that this is all gold, silver, and precious stone, and can not be persuaded that it is hay, wood, and stubble.

The converts, when developed by their fruits, prove to be only graceless proselytes, and though like tares among wheat, they may grow among the members of the church of God, they will never bear, or bring forth, fruits unto holiness. They serve to hinder the growth of the wheat, and to produce disorder and confusion in the church, and at last they are destined to be separated from the pure grain, and their end is to be burned. The important lesson taught by this parable seems to be that Christians should not sleep, as do others, but be vigilant, knowing that their adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion; and that it is his policy to corrupt the order of the church by mingling his tares among the wheat, to produce dissensions and disturb the union and fellowship of the people of God.

Again, we are taught that the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ is not a mere habit that may be acquired by association with Christians, for although unregenerated sinners may have a name to live when they are dead, though they may be held nominally in fellowship with the saints, and allowed to participate in the privileges of the church, it will not change them from tares to wheat, nor qualify them to bring forth fruit unto God. Their fruit shall ultimately demonstrate that they are the production, religiously, of vile seed, which an enemy has sown. The church had not been organized long before such tares appeared among the wheat, as, Demas and Alexander mentioned in II Tim. 4, Hymeneus and Philetus, Diotrephes, and an host of Judaizing teachers, of whom Paul said, “I would that they were cutoff.” And, we are most solemnly warned that in the last days should come perilous times, when many should come, who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof; and of the sort which creep into houses, and lead captive the silly, etc.; when these tares shall turn away their ears and be turned unto fables. But the church will be more or less infested by this sort until the final separation shall take place, at the end of the world. But to the saints it is consoling to know that the foundation of God doth nevertheless stand fast, having this seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” The separations shall be made under his supervision, and every trembling saint shall be gathered with the wheat, and all the tares shall be bound in bundles, and cast into the fire.

The tares are the only description of religious professors who feel no doubts or fears in regard to their position, while every saint, with fear and trembling, asks every day in secret ejaculations of the soul - Lord, am I thine, or am I not?

Middletown, N.Y.,
February 15, 1863

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 315 - 323

MATTHEW 21:13; MARK 11:17; LUKE 19:46

It is written, my Father's house shall be called a house of prayer but ye have made it a den of Thieves. **THE MASTER.**

Perhaps in the annels of the Gospel dispensation, a period of deeper interest, or fraught with more important events than the present cannot be found. In a retrospective view of the church, from the days of John the Baptist, a parellel with the present cannot be pointed out. In her infancy, she was persecuted, her members were few, and scattered; but even then, amidst the savage rage of her invetrate foes, she presented to the enemy an unbroken front, and the “Shout of the King was among them.” In her on-bound passage down the channel of time, we see her immerged in floods of gore, and flames of Papal persecution the most horrid engines of cruelty that demons could invent were prepared for the diabolical work of torturing and destroying the Saints of the Most High, – but then, even then! amidst the hellish rage of Pontifs, Bishops, Kings and Priests, the church maintained her virgin purity. She then at the peril of mortal life, contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, nor could the galling chain of despots, – the pains of bloody persecution, or of death in its most terrific forms, present any sufficient inducements to the Sons of Zion to abandon their faith, or any part of it, or in any measure to fall in with, or countenance any of the new and more popular schemes, plans, laws, ordinances or doctrines, then contended for by their enemies, passing thro' seas of their own blood, or evaporating in flames of fire, their spirits crowned with victory, went home to the embrace of the God whom they so dearly loved, and in whose name alone they trusted and were triumphant.

But, Alas! “How is the gold become dim, and the most fine gold changed.” Where are champions for the primitive order of the church of Christ? Whose hands have been taught to war, and their fingers to fight. – Where shall we find the undaunted sons of Zion, who are prepared to meet the torrent of opposition and bearing the fearless breast, submit to stripes, tortures and death, rather than to give up on of their Lord's commands, or submit to any thing unauthorized by him? Do they all slumber in death? Have they indeed all finished their course and gone home to glory? No, it cannot be. The hour has not yet come in which the Lord's two witnesses must be slain, and trodden under foot in the streets of the Great City Spiritually called Sodom and Egypt. For here & there we see one or more of the witnesses of the Lord clothed in sack-cloth prophecying. But they are comparatively few; yea, very few, and placed under circumstances of the most trying kind. Truly we may adopt the language of Zion, in former times, “Except the Lord, had left us a very small remnant we should have been as Sodom, and like unto Gomorrah,” (ie.) like the other Denominations professing christianity around us which are altogether given over to Idolatry, and whose end is to be burned.

But while we compare the present, with the former state of the church; let us enquire after the cause of the evident discrpance. When Zion dwelt alone, she dwelt in safety. “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.” & “When Ephraim spake trembling, he exalted himself in Israel; but when he offended in Baal, he died!”

Even so, when the church was under the lash of persecution, she spake trembling with holy fear, and divine reverence she asked counsel of God, and turned neither to the right hand nor to the left without his instruction.

But another reason why it is not with Zion, as in years that are past and gone, is this viz: when the saints were persecuted into strange cities, cast out of the Synagogues, whipped forty stripes, save one, thrown into prisons and dungeons, and into boiling oil, banished to desolate Islands, stretched on racks, dragged into courts of Inquisition, sustained the loss and confiscation of all earthly possessions, had their names cast out as evil. Yea when on the shores of our New England States (then colonies) they suffered their tongues to be boared through with hot irons, and many of them were even put to death for their faith, and practice as christians. See 208th page of the Signs &c., also Goodrich History of U.S. Page 67.

We say when such as the standing of the Baptist church; she was unable to offer any inducement to her enemies, to amalgumate themselves with her, consequently hypocrites, and nominal professors were kept back, they had no mind to share the tribulations of the saints, of the Most High. But now since a profession of piety has become the road to popularity, fame and opulence, since even the once despised, persecuted and afflicted Baptist, have many of them waxed fat, and kicked, since the Baptist Denomination have *heaped to themselves teachers having itching ears*, have builded Theological Seminaries to manufacture their own Ministers, Bishops, and Doctors, having formed unhallowed connections with the world, and with their former persecutors, under the specious names of Bible, Education, Sunday School, Missionary, Magdalen, Temperance, Anti-Tobacco, Penny, Might, Shirt collar, and Rag, Bag Societies, with numerous lucrative offices, Agencies &c. She can, she does hold out inducements of no ordinary kind to the world to “cast in their lot with her and all have one purse.”

And the children of this world flock over to her in multitudes, saying “We will eat our own bread, wear our own apparel:

only let us be called by thy name, (christian) to take away our reproach. (Infidel.)

And instead of the Denomination as such rending her garments, and sitting in sack-cloth and ashes, on this account, – the leading characters are making their boast, that their plans are owned and approved of God, because of the multitudes that are constantly joining them. But such are the present signs of the times.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorial

Signs of the Times
Volume 1, No. 17
July 17, 1833

MATTHEW XXII. 1-14.

BROTHER William Smith, of Lewis County, N. Y., has desired our views on the parable of the marriage feast – Matthew xxii. 1-14. The repeated calls of brethren and friends for our views on numerous portions of the scriptures, have certainly had a tendency to make us feel how little we know of divine things; nothing, indeed, only as the Lord by his gracious Spirit is pleased to give us light from time to time, as he is wont to bestow it upon all the subjects of his grace. In view of our own insufficiency to expound the deep and delightful mysteries of the book of God, we feel ready to decline offering our thoughts upon those passages, even when called on by brethren and friends, and to leave the exposition of difficult subjects to those who are far more competent than ourseif. But still we do not feel altogether satisfied to withhold such views as we have, and if we err, let those who are spiritually taught correct us.

The parable in question was spoken by our Lord to certain Jews, who were taking counsel together how they might entangle him in his talk. This parable and those preceding it evidently has allusion to them. By "The kingdom of heaven" spoken of, we think was intended the elements of that kingdom, as existing throughout the old dispensation among the children of Israel, and afterwards brought to light among the Gentiles. The marriage supper we understand to mean the gospel. The preparation of that feast required the slaughter of oxen and fatlings, or the sacrifice of bullocks and lambs, &c., as appointed in the law. The supper could not be announced as ready until the blood of Jewish sacrifices, as required by the law, should cease to flow. Predictions had been made by the prophets of the Lord, that such a feast should he made on that mountain, a feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, and well refined; but the time

of it should not be until the vail of the covenant which was over all flesh should be taken away, or until the hand-writing of ordinances should be nailed to the cross. The Jews are represented in this figure as having been bidden to the feast, and so they were. All the types and figures of the good things to come pointed to it. All the Jewish festivals were typical of it; and the voice of all the prophets speaking to the house of Israel, bade them be in readiness to receive the Messiah at his advent, and enter into the marriage chamber, &c. So distinctly were the words of the prophets spoken, and so clearly were they understood, that the Jews were looking for a time to come when they should realize a fulfillment of the words of the Lord; but still they were not able to discern the signs of the times, when these things were actually fulfilled.

This kingdom of heaven is compared to a certain king. It held dominion over the destinies of the house of Israel. And in the figure this king had a son. So is Christ regarded as the seed of the woman. “Unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given.” The marriage was made for this son, even as all the rites and sacrifices of the old dispensation were preparatory to the marriage festival of Christ, with that body which should become dead to the law, and married unto Christ.

At the time appointed when all the fatlings were killed, and the time for the feast had arrived, the king, to whom the kingdom is likened, sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come. The law and the prophets were until John, and when he came he proclaimed to the Jews who had been. bidden, in the sense implied, that the time was at hand. Other servants were also sent out and commanded to go not into Samaria, nor among the Gentiles, but rather to the cities of Judah; and those also proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, that the oxen and the fatling’s were killed, and all things were ready for the assembling of the guests who were to witness the

nuptial rites of this illustrious marriage. In both instances the Jews were reproved, for in the first, they rejected the counsel of God, not being baptized with the baptism of John, and when the seventy were sent out, they also made light of it; they had unfinished business of their own to do, and were by no means ready to leave the drudgery of the worldly sanctuary for the banqueting house of the King. Some among the Jews betrayed their enmity by raising persecution against, and even slaying the servants which were sent unto them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their cities. All this was eventually accomplished; as a nation they were destroyed, and the cities of Judah were literally destroyed in an awful manner.

Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy: “Go ye therefore into the highway,” &c. This accords with the apostle’s words when he asserted, It was necessary that the gospel should be first preached to you; but seeing ye count yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo we turn unto the Gentiles for so hath God commanded,” &c. This stone must be first refused by the builders, and God would make it the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence to them that stumbled at the word, being disobedient; whereunto they were appointed. After the Jews had fulfilled what was written of them in relation to Christ, and stoning and slaying his disciples, and the messengers which were sent unto them, the great commission was given to the apostles by our Lord Jesus Christ, to go to another people, among the Gentiles, into the highways, and as many as ye find, (they that believe and are baptized.) bid to the marriage. The Jews as a people were utterly rejected, and Gentile sinners are compelled to come in, that his house may be full.

This parable, as we understand it, was designed to set forth what those in the preceding chapter were employed to do, namely, that the kingdom was about to be taken away from the Jews and given to a nation (the Gentiles,) bringing forth the fruit thereof. See chap. xxi. 43.

That part of the parable which relates to the king’s surveying his guests, and the detection, arrest and punishment of him who had not the wedding garment, we defer for want of time and space for another number.

New Vernon, N.Y.,
January 15, 1846

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 2
Pages 613 – 616

MATTHEW 22:21

“Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.” (Matthew 22:21)

It is not a little singular when the Puritanic pulpits of the North and East, together with those of the New School Baptists and Methodists are ringing with politics, and their religious presses are teeming with sacrilegious interference with the policy of earthly governments - while contributions are taken up in their synagogues in money and in rifles, for the expressed purpose of enforcing their religious dogmas upon the legislatures of the country, and while the legislative and administrative powers of our States and nation are gravely deliberating on the subject of the “higher law” - while petitions are pouring into Congress from ecclesiastical bodies, praying our government to engraft upon our national Constitution the name and law of the Supreme God, that we the descendents of those Baptists who were persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, publicly whipped, chopped, and had their tongues burned through with red-hot irons, for dissenting from the doctrines and order of the legally established religion, when we venture to protest against those influences which are tending to involve us in similar, if not in more severe, trials, when we contend for a separation of ecclesiastical from the civil governments, when we attempt to show from scripture authority that Christ’s kingdom is not of this world - that it cannot be aided by human legislation, and that no earthly power or potentate has any divine right to legislate upon the laws of God to define or to enforce them, or to lay down any rules for the interpretation of the laws of God, or to settle by legislation what is or what is not sin - what God does or what he does not approve - that we should be charged by any who have ever claimed the sacred

name of Baptists, with devoting our publication to politics. Is it not remarkable that those who can discover no wrong in those anti-christian tendencies, and who, to the extent of their influence, actually sustain them, should be so very sensitive as to object to our presenting what we conceive to be the testimony of the Bible on those subjects on which the scriptures treat, because an aspiring clergy and political demogogues have dragged those subjects into politics? Is it out of place for us to enter our solemn protest against the interpretations given to the laws of God and the religion of Christ, by aspiring politicians, who are laboring to gain a dictatorial guardianship of, and censorship over, our consciences in matters which belong only to ourselves and our God?

In all ages since her organization at Pentecost has the old order of Baptists been remarkable for their loyalty to the governments of this world, under which divine Providence has placed them, so long as such governments have confined their power to its legitimate sphere. But when such governments have attempted to define for us the law of God, and to enforce upon us by pains and penalties their construction of the laws of God, we have said to them in the language of John Leland, “If you can answer for us at the bar of God, and present us guiltless before that dread tribunal, then with some show of propriety may you assume the right to judge us in meats and in drinks, in regard to Sabbath days, and new moons, and tell us when, where, how, and to whom we may pray - how we shall serve him, and what is sin in God’s account. But if you cannot take this responsibility, don’t attempt to deprive us of our liberty to serve our God according to the dictates of our own consciences, at least so long as our religious decisions and actions do not interfere with the equal rights of all other men.” The spirit which now underlies the commotion which agitates our country and threatens the destruction of our dearest rights has, from the

earliest settlement of our continent, displayed an unyielding determination to intermingle the things of Caesar with the things of God. This spirit in Cain led him to usurp dominion over the faith of Abel, and to stain his guilty hands in his brother’s blood. The same spirit in the High Priests and Roman governors led them to condemn and crucify the Son of God, and in subsequent ages under Pagan, Papal, and Protestant predominancy, to torture and murder millions, for the pretended good of their souls. The same murderous spirit could banish all dissenters from Puritanic doctrines, from our eastern colonies, and enforce their murderous edicts by penalties of death.

When our national government was organized, the same spirit was perceptible in those who denounced our Constitution, because it made no provision for a national church, a national creed, and a national clergy. This restless spirit has been developed from time to time, under a variety of forms, at one time denouncing the government for allowing the mails to be transportd on their Sabbath, and declaring it a crying sin, for which Heaven’s vengeful bolts would soon be launched. Failing to succeed in intimidating our rulers, they mounted the alcoholic hobby, and protested that God was angry because the fruit of the vine yielded wine, and declared that God regarded it as a damning sin that men should manufacture, sell, or drink, however temperately, of wines or strong drinks.

At the present time all other of their national and crying sins have dwindled into insignificance compared with that of domestic slavery. And although from his awful throne God has expressly authorized it, and in the kingdom of his saints enjoined the rules by which the relationship of masters and servants shall be recognized; still they protest that God abhors it; that it is a sin, a crying sin, and that the lowering clouds of divine wrath hang over our country because our

Southern neighbors hold now as chattled property the bond-men and bond-women, which we sold them a few years ago.

Now if this be in reality a sin against God, if the immutable God who commanded Israel to buy bond-men, and bond-women of the nations round about them, and to hold them as property, and transmit them to their posterity for an inheritance, (See Lev. xxv. 44-46) has so far changed as now to regard that as sin, which he once authorized and commanded; or if his law has so far changed as to regard that to be sin which was once obedience; if, in short, it be sin now to hold men and women in bondage, by what rule are we accountable for its existence in other States? By what authority shall we claim to be the interpreters of the divine law to those of other States or Nations? Have we no sins of our own to deplore, or answer for? Shall we thrust with side and shoulder, and say to our Southern brethren, “Stand aside. We are holier than thou”?

It was not our design, in this article, to discuss this subject, but rather to reply to some letters which we have received upon the subject, in which the correctness of our course is questioned. We assure our patrons that we have no design or desire to treat upon or meddle with politics in the columns of the “Signs”; but when questions arise upon the subject of the divine law, or on what God approves or on what he abhors, although those subjects may be paraded by wicked men in connection with their politics, it shall not deter us from publishing from pulpit, and from the press, to the extent of our ability, what God has said in his holy word with regard to them. If designing politicians make issues with us as to what is and what is not sin, must we be silent - must we, who profess to be the witnesses of the Lord, hold our peace? If the enemy advances upon us, and invades the sanctuary of God, and usurps the right to define for us the scriptures of truth, and enforce on us their decisions, though it should

involve our country in ruin, and deluge our earth with blood, is it then a time for us to sheath our sword, and leave the field in their uncontested possession?

Those who hold their politics more sacred than their religion, and cannot patronize the “Signs” unless we pledge ourself to withhold our testimony on the scriptures, may rest assured that much as we respect their opinions and desire to give them satisfaction in our humble efforts to serve them, we cannot consent to handle the word of God deceitfully. We have attained and passed our three-score years, and feel assured that the time of our departure is at hand, and whatever sacrifice we may be called to make for the truth’s sake, we hope God will give us grace to make it cheerfully rather than shun to declare the whole counsel of our God. It is undoubtedly the right of those who differ from us to withhold their patronage, but if any of our brethren in Christ have become disaffected towards us, for this cause, we beseech such to weigh well the matter before they so decide. Let the question of the apostle be considered, “Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?”

Middletown, N.Y.
March 15, 1861

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 4
Pages 471 - 475

MATTHEW XXIV.

My Brother: – Will you please give me your views on Matthew xxiv? I am at loss to know how to present the subject in the form of a text; but I will try to let you know what I want. In the third verse it is said, As he (Jesus) sat upon the Mount of Olives, his disciples asked him privately, What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? It appears to me that from that verse to the thirty-fourth, Jesus describes and tells them what shall take place before his coming and of the end of the world. And then he tells them, "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." The words, *This generation shall not pass*, is what is a mystery to me. The general acceptation of the word, *generation*, means all that were living at that time, and so I understand it. Now the query with me is, what does it mean as used in this place? This is what I want you to explain. Believe me to be your devoted friend, and, as I hope, your humble brother in the Lord. May God bless us, and give us light and understanding in his word. Farewell. - E.T. HORN.

Leak County, Miss.,
Jan. 29, 1860.

Reply. - There were three questions privately asked of the Lord by his disciples, as he sat upon the mount; our brother has embraced but two of them in his inquiry. The questions stated in the third verse are, "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming? and of the end of the world?" "These things," mentioned in the first question, referred, as we understand the subject, not to the following questions, but to the things which Jesus had just told them in the second verse should come to pass; namely, the destruction of Jerusalem, the temple and its buildings.

The disciples had just attempted to show him the buildings. And in reply to them, Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things namely, the buildings of the temple, and then added, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, "Tell us when shall these things be?" This first question must therefore have been asked in regard to the time when the things just predicted should come to pass. Why this inquiry was privately made, may be accounted for on the ground of the well known sensitiveness of the Jews, when anything was said disparagingly of the temple which they held in such veneration. As they had charged him with saying, Destroy this temple and I will rear it up again in three days, Christ had used these words when speaking of the temple of his body; but as the Jews understood him to speak of the temple which the fathers had been forty and six years in building, they were incensed at him for suggesting that it should ever be destroyed. The Jews were so exceedingly hard to admit that the temple would ever be destroyed, that we are informed by historians that when their city was besieged by the Roman army, and famine, pestilence and death raged within their walls until famishing parents feasted on the flesh of their deceased children, and even after Titus had applied the flaming torch and the devouring element was rapidly consuming the building, they would accept of no peaceful negotiations but persisted in their belief that God would avert the blow, and preserve the temple, and deliver the city. The buildings of the temple were nevertheless doomed to destruction, and not one stone should remain on another. It is not strange that the disciples should feel desirous to know when these things should be; and therefore they asked him who only could inform them of the matter. In his reply to this first question, Jesus told the disciples of many things that should accompany the fulfillment of his fearful prediction; but, as a

final answer to the first question, he told them distinctly that, "This generation should not pass away until all should be fulfilled." We understand the term generation, here used, as our brother Horn does, to mean those who were at that time living; some should live to see the fulfillment of what he had said on this subject; and this was actually the case; there were those then living who did not see death till all these things were accomplished.

The second question was, "And what shall be the sign of thy coming?" Some have understood this question as relating to his coming in the last day, to raise the dead and judge the world, and some have supposed it to embrace only his coming in the execution of this judgment on Jerusalem, and the destruction of the temple. But to us it seems that his answer to this inquiry clearly presents his coming to occupy his throne, to set up his gospel kingdom, gather in his saints, and to make himself known to them as their risen, glorified and reigning King, as he had frequently said to them that in this wise he would certainly come. I go, he says, to receive a kingdom, and will return to you again. And as he told his apostles, When the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye that have followed me in the regeneration, shall also sit up twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Was it not probable that in the expectation of these things the disciples would seek to know clearly as possible what should be the sign of his coming? At all events they inquired of him, and he told them of many things that should indicate the near approach of that coming. On the signs of his coming, we have not time now to dwell; but like the first question, this second is also settled by the emphatic declaration, this generation shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled. This declaration being made in the thirty-fourth verse, is a conclusion of his answer of the first and second questions; must include them both, and expressed the certainty that the overthrow of Jerusalem, and also the

coming of Jesus in power and great glory, as the King of Zion, should both transpire while some who were then living should continue to live on the earth. The apostles themselves who were to occupy the thrones of judgment in his gospel kingdom, were then living and reckoned in that generation, and certainly they did live to witness his coming to organize and preside over his kingdom. But in his answer to the third and last question, he does not, as we read the chapter, say, This generation shall not pass away until the end of the world I shall be accomplished, but he says, Of that day and hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father only. The day and hour of the end of the world, in whatever sense we understand him here to speak, is not a matter of revelation; it is only known to the Father, and must be regarded as among the secret things which belong to God, and which we have no right to meddle with; while things which are revealed (by the Word and Spirit) belong to us and to our children. While therefore every subject published in the Bible, belongs, as revelation from God, to us and to our children, and it is our privilege and duty to search them, and strive with all the saints to know what is their dazzling height, their awfully profound depth, and to know the love of God that surpasses the narrow limits of our understanding, it is not lawful for us to go beyond what God has revealed.

"Not Gabriel asks the reason why,
Nor God the reason gives,
Nor dares the favored angel pry
Between the folded leaves."

It is enough, but not too much, for us to examine prayerfully the unfolded and constantly unfolding leaves of that blessed book which the Lion of the tribe of Judah has unsealed, and given as a volume of revelation. Therefore, to the law and to the testimony; if any speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

We do not attempt to fix the application of the "end of the world," as here used, to the final dissolution of nature; for, from what follows in this and the next chapter, we have long believed that the "end of the world" here intended to be the end of the Jewish economy, which was simultaneous with the coming of Christ in his kingdom, as set forth in the foregoing remarks. But as that subject is not fairly embraced in our brother's inquiry, we will leave it, at least, for the present.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N. Y., March 1, 1860.

MATTHEW XXIV. 21-39.

It would afford us much pleasure to give a satisfactory explanation of every passage of Scripture on which we are so frequently called to express our views, by our numerous correspondents, if we had the ability, and could command the necessary time and space which would be required; but in all these respects we are deficient. On this Scripture referred to, we do not feel prepared to speak with as much confidence as we could wish, but we nevertheless offer a few suggestions, which may perhaps draw out the clearer views of some brother to whose mind the subject has been more fully opened, and thereby our readers generally may be edified. The connection shows that our Lord had been instructing his disciples in regard to the time when the building, the temple at Jerusalem, should be thrown down, and what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world. In regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the tribulations which should come upon the Jews when the cloud of impending retribution should burst in wrath upon them. Subsequent history as fully identified the time literally when this fearful prediction was accomplished; and in our text we are told, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken; and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man, in heaven," &c.

We do not feel at liberty to understand these predictions as relating literally to the natural heavens, or the natural sun and moon and stars; for whatever natural phenomena may have been witnessed, the subject must certainly have related to the heavens, sun, moon and stars figuratively, as used in Rev. xii. 1, 4; and the shaking of the powers of the heavens, that which is signified in Heb. xii. 26, 27, wherein is set forth

the total abolishment of the rites and ordinances of the Jewish heavens. Mark the language of the inspired writer to the Hebrews: “See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth; but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as the things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” And then the admonition which follows this last quotation: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear,” shows clearly that this shaking of the powers of the heavens, darkening of the sun and moon of that heaven which was shaken, and the falling, or casting down to the earth those stars which were drawn by the tail of the dragon, (Rev. xii. 4,) were preparatory to the more full revelation of the church in her gospel organization and perpetuity, in distinction from that which was to pass away. If we are correct thus far in regard to the import of the twenty-ninth verse of our text, it must follow that in the revelation of Christ in fulfilling the judgments which should fall upon Jerusalem, should be recognized the sign or evidence of the Son of man in heaven. Truly this was a sign, for before Christ suffered on the cross he had repeatedly given it as such; that is, as a sign on which his disciples might rely, after his death and resurrection and ascension, that he was accepted in his mediatorial work, and that he fully represented the saints for whom he had officiated in his priesthood: these things which he had declared should be, were necessary to show that he was in heaven. Not only that he had entered into heaven itself for us, but that he had ascended his mediatorial throne, and possessed all power in heaven and in earth, and was and is mighty and able to save unto the uttermost them that

come unto God by him, seeing that he ever lives to make intercession for them.

Whatever allusion this declaration may have to his coming at the last day, to raise the dead and judge the world, we will not presume to say, but to our mind, there is a sense in which his words were fulfilled before the generation then on the earth had passed away. As before that generation had literally passed away these predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, were literally fulfilled, and in their fulfillment a sign, unmistakable and clear, was given of his mediatorial glory, his spiritual kingdom brought to light in her gospel organization, the throne of his glory, peculiarly as that of the Son of man, was manifested; so also we may infer, that although death may bear down to the grave all the posterity of Adam, yet the race of mankind, divided into two generations, the one called a generation of vipers, and the other a chosen generation, as such they shall not pass away until the second coming of Christ at the last day.

Middletown, N. Y.
June 2, 1856

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 3
Pages 337 - 339

MATTHEW 24:42.

Meriwether Co., Ga.
November 20, 1868.

Brother Beebe: – I was much interested in your editorial on the "Portentous Signs," and would like to have your views more extensively on that subject. The minds of the Lord's people in this section of the country are exercised on the subject. Will you please give us your views on Matthew 24:42, through the "Signs of the Times."

Yours in hope of eternal life,
George W. Gersham.

Reply: - The text proposed contains a very appropriate admonition to the saints, especially to the ministers of the gospel, which although never unopportune, is peculiarly applicable when unusual and portentous signs are given to warn the children of God of approaching events of fearful import. The words were addressed to the disciples by our Lord after he had told them of the signs which should precede the destruction of Jerusalem, his coming, and the end of the world. He said to them, "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." They could not know the hour until it should arrive, because it was not a matter of revelation. "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only." The wisdom of God in withholding this knowledge from his saints and from his angels, or messengers, is unquestionable; and while the profound secret was thus locked up in the inscrutable counsel of his own sovereign will, the signs of near approach to that day and hour were clearly stated. "Behold [says Jesus] I have told you before." Knowing therefore what should be the signs, and being ignorant of the day and hour was calculated to impress their minds with the

importance of the admonition to watch. And as he has elsewhere added, “and pray that ye enter not into temptation.” Our exposure to temptation at such times, when iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, and when the fearful judgments of the Lord are about to surprise the ungodly, all urge the necessity of watchfulness, and prayer to him who alone can shield us from all harm. To illustrate the necessity of watching, our Lord says, “But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.” Then he applies these warnings to his servants, or ministers, who like stewards are put in trust over their Lord’s household, to give them meat in due season. “Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” The stewards in the household of our Lord have a solemn charge over all the men servants and maid servants of the house of God, to take the oversight thereof, and to feed the flock of God which he hath purchased with his own blood: and it shall be blessed for them to be found at all times so doing; instant in season, out of season; rightly dividing the word, and giving to every one an appropriate portion in due season. But in the day of temptation we have reason to apprehend that some even of the Lord’s servants who have been set apart to feed the sheep and lambs will be found remiss in the discharge of the duties enjoined on them. This we infer from the following: “But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming, and shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour when he is not aware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” The temporal calamities which came upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah must have involved the

heedless and disobedient disciples, as well as the hypocrites, if any of them were lingering there after the signs were given, until the storm of wrath came down; and so it shall undoubtedly be when Babylon shall receive her doom, with such of the servants of Christ, if any there shall be who disregard the signs and warnings given, and say in their heart there is no danger; my Lord delayeth his coming; and abuse their fellow servants - when the judgments clearly indicated shall come, they will with the hypocrites and unbelievers receive of the temporal plagues, in common with others, and they shall weep, while the hypocrites shall gnash their teeth. John “heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues (Revelation 18:4).” If the children of God, the stewards, and servants, who have received a charge to give to those of the household of God their meat in due season, drink and become drunken with the cup of Babylon, and eat and drink with the enemies of the truth, and use their influence against the advocates of the truth and righteousness, in disregard of the warning that comes from heaven, they shall as surely be cut asunder from the church, from her fellowship, and the protection from temporal judgments which are thrown around the church, as that the mouth of God has spoken it.

Watch, therefore, from these solemn considerations, and know ye there is a necessity for watching, diligently, vigilantly, and prayerfully. If it had pleased the Lord to inform us of the day and the hour, we would have no occasion to watch for the premonitory signs; but we know not the day nor the hour, and therefore our Lord has commanded us to watch, and not only to watch, but also to admonish one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching; and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, for that purpose, as the manner of some is.

"For ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." We are fully satisfied that our Lord is to come, will come, and will not tarry; and we are further instructed that when he shall come, he will be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe. (See II Thessalonians 1:8-10.)

The coming of our Lord should not be regarded with any dread by those who love and obey him. His coming will be a glorious jubilee of triumph and rest to them. When in all the power, majesty and glory of the Father, he shall come with a shout, and with the voice of the Arch Angel, and with the trump of God, they shall hail him with joy, saying, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him." It shall be sudden. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west; so also shall the coming of the Son of man be." How instantaneous will be the change. As the vivid lightning darts from the cloud, shall be his advent; and who can stand when he appeareth?

Could we but realize that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night, sudden as the lightning's flash, and that, from the numerous indications by signs on which we are instructed to rely, it may be very near at hand, may we not conclude that many a wayward Christian would be this moment hastening to confess his faults to his offended brother; that many a delinquent child would make haste to find the footsteps of the dear flock of Christ; that many a quickened child of God who has long delayed to obey the precepts of Christ, and to take his yoke in the sacred ordinance of baptism, would rally to Jordan's banks in anxious haste to own his Lord and Master? How it would allay

our thirst for the treasures and vanities of this vain and transitory world. How easily then they could find more time for frequenting the house of prayer, and for mingling in sweet devotion with the children of God. “But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thessalonians 5:4-9).”

Middletown, N.Y.
February 1, 1869.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 7
Pages 350 – 353

MATTHEW 25:14-30

We have often been requested to give our views on this parable, and we have sometimes ventured to give such views as we have had on the subject; but we have never pretended to have any special light upon this subject, nor do we now feel competent to the undertaking. We have always found it difficult to explain satisfactorily to our own mind any of the parables contained in the sacred volume, excepting so far as their obvious intention may be inferred from the subjects and circumstances on which they were spoken. God has been pleased to open his mouth in parables and to utter dark sayings of old (Psa. 78:2), and it was the practice of our Redeemer in the days of his flesh to use parables, and without a parable spake he not unto the multitude. (Matt. 13:34) "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speaketh thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive." (Matt. 13:10-14)

Herein is the wisdom, purpose, and pleasure of God displayed in hiding these things from the wise and prudent of this world, and in revealing them unto babes in his kingdom; that no man shall glory in his presence; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. The very parables which involve the instructions of Christ in impenetrable darkness to the multitude are employed by the Spirit to illustrate the same

things to those unto whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom. A parable is in itself simply a similitude, or a supposed case, used to illustrate a reality. And these similitudes and comparisons are so chosen and used by infinite wisdom, as to secure the great design of God, both in concealing the things of the Spirit from the carnal, and in instructing his disciples. Thus, like the cloud which attended Israel in the wilderness, it afforded light and protection to them, while it was darkness to their enemies.

The parable now to be considered is given, with several others of like import, for the special admonition of the disciples, as it was not addressed to the multitude, as there were none present but disciples, who had asked him certain questions privately, as he sat with them on the mount of Olives, and was therefore spoken to them for their exclusive benefit. (See Chapter 24:3.)

The subject on which these parables were spoken must be understood in order to know their design and application. Our Lord had been personally with these disciples from the time they were called to be his servants, but now he was soon to go into a far country, or to suffer, and die upon the cross, and then arise from the dead and ascend up into heaven, which from earth is a far country; but he was also to return again in due time. One of the three questions which they had asked him was, “What shall be the sign of thy coming?” To this he had replied, “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart,

My lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he booketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 24:42-44; 46-51.)

From all these preceding admonitions in the twenty-fourth chapter we may safely infer that the three parables in the twenty-fifth chapter were used by our Lord to solemnly impress his disciples with an understanding of the importance of their obligation to obey him as their divine Master, and especially when he should go to his Father, and they see him no more in the flesh. For although he was about to go away, he had assured them he would come to them again, and as a Master, who had an undisputed right to their service; he would hold them to a rigid account of their stewardship, at his coming. Now speaking of the time of his coming to reckon with them, he says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins," etc. That is, at the time of his coming, which time they did not know for it should be as a thief in the night. The wise virgins represent the faithful servants, who shall be prepared for the coming of their lord, as they were with lamps trimmed and burning at the coming of the bridegroom, and the foolish virgins represent the wicked and slothful servants which had concluded their lord delayed his coming, and were carelessly mingling with the drunken. And in applying the parable of the virgins, he adds this parable of the talents, saying, "For *the kingdom of heaven* is as a man traveling into a far country," etc. These italicized words are supplied by our translators. Should we omit them, the text will read, "For, as a man traveling into a far country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another, one; to every man according to his several

ability, and straightway took his journey." If we have understood the foregoing correctly, Christ alludes to himself as the Lord, or Master of the servants, and to his being about to leave them, as stewards, in charge of his goods. The servants are said to be his own servants, and he invests them with talent, or talents, according to their respective ability. The talents and the ability of all the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ are furnished them by him. He is their Lord and Master; all that they have and all they are, are his property, and they are not their own, hence he has a right to direct and control them, and to discriminate in the amount of talents and responsibility. And certainly Christ has done this; when he took his journey in his ascension: "When he ascended up on high, he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." There is a diversity of gifts, but all by the same spirit, and this diversity is set forth in our parable as five, two, and one talents. Having thus commissioned his own servants, straitway he took his journey. The very last interview he held with his disciples he breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and bid them, "Go, teach all nations," etc., "And straitway a cloud received him out of their sight." But an angel informed them that he would return again in like manner as they had seen him go up into heaven; all of which seems to agree perfectly with the import of this parable. But when he should so return he did not tell them; but bid them watch - for it should be like a thief in the night, or at least at a time when the unruly servants would least expect his return. The servant which had five, and he who had two talents improved them, and received the approbation of their lord at his coming, and were welcomed into the joy of their lord. This

was not, however, as a reward of merit, for they being servants, as we have before said, with all their ability and talents, belonged to and were the property of their master. This idea is expressly stated - these were his own servants, hence their service belonged to him; but as a gracious act, he made them partakers of his joy. Thus Paul, while disclaiming all merit, says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." The crown is a gift, not a debt, or payment for service rendered; and as to Paul, so also to all who love the appearing of Christ.

Thus far perhaps, our views of the parable may seem sufficiently clear to the sister who asked, and others, but the more difficult part of the subject remains to be discussed, or elucidated. The wicked and slothful servant also had a talent and did not improve it, and it is taken from him and given to him that had ten talents, and he is cast into outer darkness, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The supposed difficulty will be obviated when we consider the difference between servants of the Lord and the children of God. Christ not only is the everlasting Father of that seed which God has said shall serve him and be counted to him for a generation, but he is also their Master, their Owner, their Lord, and their King. In all the parables and figures as in every express declaration of the scriptures where God's people are brought to view in the relationship of children, their vital and indissoluble union and joint heirship with him is distinctly expressed, and they can no more fail of their inheritance of glory than Christ can fail of the glory which he had with his Father before the world began. But when the disciples are presented in the relation of servants, their

relative duties, obligations, and punishment for delinquencies are implied. The servant abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth ever. The discipline of the servant and that of a son, until the son becomes of age, maybe alike, but the privilege and certain inheritance of the two are widely different. As it is said, “A seed shall *serve* him,” etc. (Psa. 22:30). We infer that all the seed, or children of God, are called into the service of Christ, to obey his commands, walk in his precepts, and keep his judgments, and in doing this they are servants, as well as sons. But we presume Christ has servants which are not sons; or at least not manifest as sons. A servant of Christ is equivalent to a disciple, and a disciple of Christ is one who serves, and obeys whatsoever he commands them. But Christ himself has said, “And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:27) But he does not say they cannot be his children. To be a child depends wholly on relationship; but to be a servant, on allegiance and service. “His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey.”

The difference will more clearly appear by considering the disciples, or servants of Jesus to whom this parable was originally spoken. They were all certainly the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he said he was their Master. But of at least one of them we presume it will not be contended that he was a son. Judas Iscariot was a disciple. Jesus called to him twelve disciples, whom he named apostles, and Judas was one of that number. And according to the sense of this parable, he received a talent - or a part of the ministry. “And in those days Peter stood in the midst of the disciples, and said, Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.” “For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let

his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein; and, his bishoprick let another take." (Acts 1:15-17, 20)

Now should we suppose Judas to have been a servant, or disciple, as he is really called, and this ministry to be the goods divided among the servants, and Judas to have received one talent, and Paul to have received five, and as he labored more abundantly than all the servants, to have gained the other five; the one talent was ultimately taken from Judas, and given to Paul, for Paul was called to take the bishoprick vacated by Judas, and Paul, as we have shown, did finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received, and had entered into the joy of his Lord, to wear the crown of righteousness which the righteous Judge has given to him; and Judas is fallen, and goes to his own place where there is darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth. The case of Judas among the disciples - his wickedness, and punishment, answers well to the servant who was cast out into outer darkness.

But not only Judas among the apostles, but there were multitudes of disciples who called Jesus Master, who could not endure his doctrine, and turned away and walked no more with him.

But as we have presented some servants who give no evidence of being sons, before we close we will enquire if there be not some sons or children who are not, strictly speaking, servants or disciples? Are there not some, yea, many, who have passed from death unto life, have tasted the good word of life and of the joys of the world to come; - who have seen themselves poor, guilty, lost and perishing sinners, justly condemned by the righteous law of God; who in their extremity cried out, "Lord, save or I perish," who have felt the joy of pardoned sins, unto whom Jesus has been revealed as their Savior, the chiefest among ten thousand, and

altogether lovely, who have never taken up their cross and followed their Lord and Master in baptism, or any of his ordinances? If there are such, and we believe we know of many, they certainly are children, for they were born again, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God - can they be disciples? Jesus says they cannot; and if they do not obey him, how can they be his servants? “A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master; if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear, saith the Lord of hosts?” (Mal. 1:6) But how is it that a son who loves his father should withhold the honor due by obeying and serving him? How is it set forth in the parable? The undutiful servant says, “I knew thee, that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth.” In the application of the admonition presented in this subject, let us enquire whether there be not some of God’s children who are reasoning as did the slothful servant, and saying their Lord’s requirements are hard and unreasonable? If he requires me to come out and improve my talent, by public profession of his name, and obedience to his command, he would reap where he has not sown. If he would sow more plentifully, that is, if he would relieve me of all my doubts and fears, and give me more light, joy, and comfort, more zeal and strength, and remove this troublesome cross out of my way, and give me a full assurance that my pathway shall be smooth and pleasant, then I would not think it hard that he should have my service.

Not only are there multitudes of this class of delinquents, but also among those who have publicly espoused his cause, there may be found those who say, “If the Lord would give me a greater gift so that I could speak like some who have five times the amount of talent that I have, I would lift up my voice as a witness for God and truth; but as it is, why should

I show my ignorance by exhibiting my one talent, and so perhaps bring down on me the scorn and reproach of the enemy?" And among the ministers of the word there may be some who say, "Alas! for me. The Lord requires me to preach his gospel that he has sowed so sparingly. I know so little, and am surrounded by so many hindrances which the Lord could, if it were his pleasure, so easily remove. My time and attention is so closely occupied to know how to answer the questions, What shall I eat? What shall I drink? And where withal shall I be clothed? How can I neglect my farm or merchandise, or whatever my worldly occupation may be, without injustice to myself and to my family?" Thus the earth of our carnal reasoning, and the affairs of the world, may bury up, to some extent, if not altogether, the talent. But let us be assured, if we are the Lord's children, we shall be saved, yet so as by fire; and as his servants, we shall feel his chastening scourge, and go into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Of course, we do not mean that God's children shall finally fail of their inheritance in glory; for God is faithful, he will not deny himself; but he is also righteous, and he will visit our transgressions with his rod, and our disobedience and slothfulness with many stripes.

When Israel for their disobedience and idolatry were sent down into Babylon, then some of them wept when they remembered Zion; it was to them a place of darkness - of weeping - and lamentation; while there was also, on the part of their adversaries, gnashing of teeth. The tumults which now prevail in the world, the wars and rumors of wars which agitate the nations of the earth, and especially our own beloved States, should admonish us that God's righteous judgments are abroad; that the day of reckoning is at hand; that our Lord cometh in an hour when transgressors think not. And the prophet saith he cometh suddenly to his temple.

But who shall abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?

Whatever our ability or opportunity may be, our Lord has given us the full amount of talent that he requires us to improve. He will reap no more than he has sown, he will not gather what he has not strewed. He will not require of us the improvement of talents given to others. Where much is given, much will be required, and where little is given, but little will be required. If any of us cannot reap, perhaps we can bind some of the sheaves. Let us be active, for the harvest is great and the laborers are few.

Middletown, N.Y.,
November 15, 1861.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Editorials Volume 5
Pages 82 – 90